

"The Maurya Empire," by F. W. Thomas, Chapters 18-20 from *Cambridge History of India*, Volume 1 (Cambridge, 1922): Chapter 18. Chandragupta, the Founder of the Maurya Empire; Chapter 19. Political and Social Organization of the Maurya Empire; Chapter 20. Asoka, the Imperial Patron of Buddhism.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### CHANDRAGUPTA, THE FOUNDER OF THE MAURYA EMPIRE

WITH the Maurya dynasty begins the period of continuous history in India, a transition due to a concurrence of causes. In the first place, the invasion of Alexander and some other occasions of contact with the West furnish chronological limits of relative definiteness, to which certain archaeological and literary circumstances readily conform. Secondly, the establishment of a single paramount power in Hindustān, embracing a part even of the country south of the Vindhya mountains and standing in relation to the still independent areas, supplies a unity which previously was lacking and which, in fact, was rarely realised in later ages. The personalities also of two of the members of the dynasty stand out more clearly than is usual in India, in the case of one, indeed, with a vividness which would be remarkable even in the West. The literary material gain is of exceptional variety and authenticity. Not to mention the information afforded by the histories of Alexander's Indian campaign and the accounts of the Seleucid empire, we have in the memoirs of Megasthenes, a Seleucid envoy at the court of the first Maurya, a picture, unfortunately fragmentary, of the country, its administrative and social features, which research continues to verify in all its main details. Aṣoka's own rescripts, graven upon rocks and pillars, are documents of unassailable fidelity. The recently recovered Arthaśāstra ascribed to Kauṭilya, otherwise named Chāṇakya and Viśnugupta, though in principle it conveys no new conception of an Indian polity, is in virtue of its date, which clearly falls within or near the Maurya period, and of the abundant light which in detail it sheds upon the life of the people, especially upon the arts of peace and war, perhaps the most precious work in the whole of Sanskrit literature. Finally, a most skilfully constructed political drama, the *Mudrārākṣha* of Viṣākhadatta, preserves, in spite of a relatively recent date, some outlines of the events which attended the foundation of the dynasty.

The invasion of Alexander found the Punjab, as we have seen<sup>1</sup>, divided among a number of relatively inconsiderable tribes, a state of things which had probably always subsisted. He left it substantially unchanged, except that he recognised two of the larger states, that of Takshaçilā (Taxila), which had facilitated his entrance into India, and the rival kingdom of Porus (Paurava or the king of the Pūrus), whom he had conquered. The former was maintained in the region between the Indus and the Hydaspes (Jhelum), while the latter was made to embrace all the more easterly territory as far as the Hyphasis (Beās). The two kings were reconciled and united by a matrimonial alliance. Alexander further confirmed, under the title of Satrap, Abhisares, ruler of the Himālayan districts of the Punjab<sup>2</sup>. The nations occupying the large extent of country about the confluences of the five rivers were placed under Philippus as satrap, and Sind under Pithon.

The limit of Alexander's easterly advance was the Beās. The last kingdom with which he came in contact was that of Phegelas<sup>3</sup>, adjoining the river, whether on the right or left bank does not appear,—possibly it was the country between that river and the Sutlej. The mutiny which arrested the victorious progress occurred in a region which—broadly defined—has in all periods of Indian history been pivotal<sup>4</sup>. The desert of Rājputāna, running up towards the mountains, leaves only a narrow neck joining the Punjab to the rest of Hindustān. Here to the east was the country of the Kurus and Pañchālas, the scene of the legendary wars of the Mahābhārata; here was Thānesar, where arose in the sixth century A.D. the dynasty of Harsha; and here are Pānīpat and Delhi. Alexander would have had, so he was told, to cross a desert of eleven days march, in order to reach the Ganges, beyond which lay two great peoples, the Prasii and Gangaridae<sup>5</sup>, whose king Agrammes, or Xandrames, kept in the field an army of 20,000 cavalry, 200,000 infantry, 2000 chariots, and 3000 (or 4000)

<sup>1</sup> Chapter xv, p. 345.

<sup>2</sup> The mountains of the Abisares, from which flows the river Soanus (Megasthenes xx) = the Sohan, corresponds to the Abhisāra region, defined by Stein (*Rājatarāṅgīnī* trans. i, 180 n.) as denoting the hills lying between the Jhelum and the Chenāb. But it may at this time have included more, extending to the Indus, as suggested by the king's relations with the Assakēnoi (*supra*, p. 353).

<sup>3</sup> = Bhagala (?); see Chapter xv, p. 372.

<sup>4</sup> Chapter i, p. 23.

<sup>5</sup> On the various forms of the name Prasii in Greek and Latin writers,—Πράσιοι, Πραῖσοι, Πραῖσιοι, Πράξιοι, Πραξιακοί, Βρήσιοι, Pharrasii,—see Schwanbeck's *Megasthenis Indica*, p. 12, n. 6, and Lassen, *Ind. Alt.* ii, pp. 210–1, n. 1. The Sanskrit is *Prāçhya*. As regards the Gangaridae (or Gaggaridae) the view that the name was invented by the Greeks (Lassen, *loc. cit.*) seems improbable.

elephants. Upon inquiry, Alexander was informed by Phegelas and Porus<sup>1</sup> that the king was a man of worthless character, the son of a barber, and that he had obtained the throne by the murder of his predecessor, whose chief queen he had corrupted.

We learn from Megasthenes (I, 16) and Ptolemy (VII, 1, 82; 2, 14) that the Gangaridae occupied the delta of the Ganges. The name Prasii, or *Prāchyas*, 'Easterns,' would properly denote the peoples east of the Middle Country or Central Hindustān, which extends as far as the confluence of the Ganges and Jumna at Allahābād. Either, therefore, the name 'Easterns' was used by Alexander's informants in a more general sense, as the correlative of 'Westerns,' or it reflects what in any case is the fact, that the Pañchālas, Çūrasenas, Kosalas and other peoples of the Middle Country had fallen under the domination of the power of Magadha (S. Bihār), with its capital Pāṭaliputra, at the junction of the Ganges and the Son. The beginnings of this suzerainty appear already in the early Buddhist books<sup>2</sup>; and the dynasty ruling in Pāṭaliputra, which city was founded by Udayin, grandson of Buddha's contemporary Ajātaśatru, is recognised in the Brāhman literature as representative of Indian sovereignty. Whether it held also the countries stretching westward to the south of the great desert, and in particular the famous realm of Mālwā, with its capital Avanti, or Ujjain, we have no means of knowing: but a negative answer is probable. This region, as also the continuation to the western coast of Kāthiāwār and Gujarāt, escaped the purview of Alexander and his historians. Both were well within the horizon of his Indian informants, since the trade connexion between Bengal and the coast regions of Çūrpāraka and Surāshṭra had been from of old no less familiar than was the northern route of scholars<sup>3</sup> and traders journeying to Takshaçilā and Kābul.

In the Agrammes, or Xandrames<sup>4</sup>, of the Greek writers there has been no difficulty in recognising the Dhana-Nanda of the Sanskrit books; and the very name, in the form Nandrus, has been conjecturally restored to the text of Justin<sup>5</sup>. It is the name of his dynasty, which according to the Purāṇas ruled during exactly a century; Chandramās would be the equivalent of his

<sup>1</sup> See Q. Curtius, ix, 2 and Diodorus, xciii; also by Candragupta acc. to Plutarch, *Alexander*, lxii.

<sup>2</sup> Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India* (London, 1903), pp. 12 sqq.; see Chapter vii, pp. 182 sqq.

<sup>3</sup> Fick, *Die Sociale Gliederung*, esp. p. 130; Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, pp. 8, 28, 203.

<sup>4</sup> Agrammes in Q. Curtius, Xandrames in Diodorus.

<sup>5</sup> xv, 4: quippe sua procacitate Alexandrum (read Nandrum) regem offendisset.



Greek appellative. His overthrow, which Alexander was prevented from attempting, resulted from the conditions which the invasion left behind. It established the supremacy of the Mauryas under Chandragupta.

The details of this peripetia are matter for inference ; but the antecedents of the two chief actors in the drama are sufficiently certain. Chandragupta<sup>1</sup> is represented as a low-born connexion of the family of Nanda. His surname Maurya is explained by the Indian authorities as meaning 'son of Murā,' who is described as a concubine of the king. A more flattering account<sup>2</sup> makes the Mauryas an Himālayan offshoot of the noble sept of the Çākya, the race of Buddha ; and, apart from this connexion, the supposition of a tribal name seems probable, since a tribe of Morieis is mentioned by the Greeks<sup>3</sup> and will perhaps be identical with the Moriyas of the Pāli books<sup>4</sup>. However that may be, Chandragupta had incurred the displeasure of Nanda, whom he had served in the office of *senāpati*, or Commander-in-Chief. He is said to have made an attempt against his master, instigated by the Brāhman Vishnugupta, Chāṇakya, or Kauṭilya, who in his person, and perhaps also as representing a disloyal priestly movement, had been disrespectfully treated by the king. The case of Jehu offers a familiar parallel ; but the outcome was otherwise. Chandragupta fled with his fellow conspirator<sup>5</sup>, who figures in literature as the Machiavelli of India. In the movement which subsequently led to the overthrow of Nanda Chāṇakya is represented as the directing mind.

The abortive attempt must have preceded the invasion of Alexander, whom Chandragupta is said to have met in the Punjab<sup>6</sup>. At that time Nanda still reigned. The dating of the subsequent events depends upon the correctness of the account of them contained in the *Mudrārākṣha*. According to this authority it was as head of a confederacy, in which the chief ally

<sup>1</sup> The Indian, and also the Greek, accounts of Chandragupta are quoted and discussed by Lassen, *op. cit.* II, pp. 205 sqq. The Greek forms of the name, some of them pointing to a Prākṛit original, are *Σανδρόκοττος*, *Σανδράκοττος*, *Σανδράκοττας*, *Ἀνδρόκοττος*, *Σανδρόκωπτος*. The identification with Chandragupta is due to Sir William Jones (*Asiatic Researches*, IV, p. 11).

<sup>2</sup> From the commentary to the Pāli *Mahāwanso* (ed. Turnour, Introduction, pp. xxxviii-xlii).

<sup>3</sup> From Euphron : see Lassen, *op. cit.* II, p. 205, n. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Moriyas of Pipphalivana (*Dīgha Nikāya*, II, p. 167).

<sup>5</sup> In the Pāli account mentioned above Chandragupta meets Chāṇakya, who is represented as a native of Takṣaṣilā, already in company with a Parvata. For the Jain version, see Prof. Jacobi's edition of Hemachandra's *Sthavīrāvalīcharita*, pp. 55 sqq.

<sup>6</sup> Plutarch, *Alexander*, LXII.

was the king of the Himālayan districts in the Punjab, that Chandragupta invaded the Magadhan empire. The play dates from perhaps the seventh century A.D.; but we need not question its evidence, which we are justified by some analogies<sup>1</sup> in regarding as a genuine theatrical tradition: moreover there exists a Buddhist and Jain story which makes Chandragupta's second attempt begin with the frontiers. Further, a conquest of the Punjab by Chandragupta with forces from Eastern Hindustān has little inherent plausibility: before the British power the movement had been consistently in the opposite direction.

A precise date for the overthrow of Nanda seems with our present evidence impossible. It can hardly have been effected without the co-operation of the kingdom of Porus. We have then two alternatives. Either Porus participated in the invasion and is the Parvataka, the ally of Chandragupta, in the drama<sup>2</sup>, in which case the year 321 B.C. would be not unlikely, as the death of Porus seems to have followed that of Alexander by no long interval. Or his successor, whether a member of his family or Chandragupta himself, was a participator: and then we have no means of dating, unless we allow the indications of the drama to persuade us that Eudamus, the assassinator of Porus, who in 323 succeeded Philippos as Alexander's representative and who retired from India in about 317, was also a partner in the exploit<sup>3</sup>. As regards the incidents of the campaign, we have no trustworthy information. Nanda was defeated and killed, and his capital occupied.

Here begins the action of the drama. According to this authority, Chāṇakya, the instigator of Chandragupta, contrives the death of Parvataka, the chief ally, and then of his brother Vairodhaka, which causes the son of the former, Malayaketu, along with the remaining allies to withdraw their troops to a distance. They are joined by Rākshasa, the faithful minister of the Nandas and by others from the capital, in some cases with the connivance of Chāṇakya. What follows is a complicated intrigue. In the end Malayaketu becomes suspicious of his allies, whom he puts to

<sup>1</sup> The plots of some of the recently discovered plays of Bhāsa seem to have been appropriated almost entire by the later dramatists, e.g. by the author of the *Mṛicchakāṭikā*.

<sup>2</sup> In that case the death of Porus must have been due to Chandragupta, and not to Eudamus. An identification of Parvata with a king of Nepāl is indicated by Jacobi, *op. cit.* p. 58, n. 1.

<sup>3</sup> On this question see the acute observations of Lassen, *op. cit.* II, pp. 213-17. The names of the allied kings in the drama need not be seriously considered, since Sanskrit literature is rich in varieties of nomenclature, which hardly ever fail, even in closely related versions of a single story.

death, and also of Rākshasa. The latter has no longer any option but to accept the offers of Chandragupta, who allows Malayaketu to retire in peace to his own dominions.

At this point the Indian tradition takes leave of Chandragupta and his mentor. The latter, his vow of vengeance accomplished, returns to his Brāhman hermitage. For Chandragupta the ensuing years must have been strenuous. The great military progress of Seleucus, whereby he sought to consolidate the eastern part of his dominions, brought him to the Indus about the year 305. He found Chandragupta, now master of all Hindustān, awaiting him with an immense army. For Seleucus the task proved too great: he crossed the Indus, but either no battle ensued, or an indecisive one. Seleucus was content to secure a safe retirement and a gift of 500 elephants by the surrender of all the Greek dominions as far as the Kābul valley. Upon these terms a matrimonial alliance was arranged<sup>1</sup>.

Thus the year 305 saw the empire of the successful adventurer of Pāṭaliputra safely established behind the Hindu Kush on the north and the Afghān highlands rising above Herāt on the west. At what period it came to include also the western provinces of Sind, Kāthiāwār, and Gujarāt, which, as well as Mālwā, we find in the possession of his grandson, we are not informed. But probably these also were acquired by the founder of the dynasty.

Chandragupta maintained his friendly relations with the Greeks. Seleucus received gifts from him; and his envoy Megasthenes resided for some considerable time, and perhaps on more than one occasion, at the court of Pāṭaliputra<sup>2</sup>. He was a friend of Sibyrtius, who in 324 was appointed by Alexander to the Satrapy of Gedrosia and Arachosia, and in 316 was again appointed by Antigonus. The date, or dates, of his mission must naturally be later than the campaign of Seleucus (c. 305) and earlier than the death of Chandragupta (c. 297); but the time is otherwise undetermined. It is to Megasthenes that the classical peoples were

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter xvii, p. 431. That Seleucus made no great headway against Chandragupta is proved at length by Schwanbeck, *op. cit.* pp. 11–19, where the authorities are discussed. The surrender of the Kābul valley is also indicated by Strabo, xv, 1, 10 and 2, 9: see also Lassen, *De Pentapotamia Indica* (Bonn, 1827), p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> Arrian, v, 6, 1: Μεγασθένης, ὃς ξυῆν μὲν Σιβυρτίῳ τῷ Σατράπῃ τῆς Ἀραχωσίας, πολλάκις δὲ λέγει ἀφικέσθαι παρὰ Σανδράκοττον τὸν Ἰνδῶν βασιλέα, 'Megasthenes, who lived indeed with Sibyrtius, the Satrap of Arachosia, but several times, as he states, arrived at the presence of Sandracottus, the king of the Indians.' The view of Schwanbeck (p. 33) and Lassen (ed. 1, p. 209, n. 3; but rejected in ed. 2, p. 219, n. 1), who think this statement consistent with several interviews in the course of a single mission, seems untenable: ἀφικέσθαι could hardly bear that sense.



indebted for nearly all the precise information which they have transmitted concerning the Indian peoples.

According to Justin (xv, 4) the rule of Chandragupta was oppressive; but the judgment is not supported by details or by Indian evidence. The consensus of Sanskrit writings on policy discountenances excessive leniency, and insists upon the retributory function of the ruler, who in maintaining order and protecting weakness should not shrink from severity; while in time of need he is entitled to call upon his people to bear 'like strong bulls' a considerable burden of taxation<sup>1</sup>. The duration of the reign is stated by the Purāṇas, in agreement with the Buddhist books, at twenty-four years. It would be uncritical, however, to regard these testimonies as from the beginning independent, or to attach any special credence to the exact figure. Moreover, the initial date is uncertain, the Jains presenting a date equivalent to 313 (312) B.C., while the Buddhists of Ceylon give 321, and the Brāhman writings withhold any reference to a fixed era. It would be idle to dwell further upon a matter of so much uncertainty. Our defective knowledge of the chronology is in striking contrast to the trustworthy information which we possess concerning the country and its administration.

The extent of the dominions of Chandragupta has already been stated. But his authority cannot have been everywhere exercised in the same manner or the same measure. Indian conquerors do not for the most part displace the rulers whom they subdue, nor was the example of Alexander in India to the contrary. Accordingly we may assume that the empire of Chandragupta included feudatory kingdoms; and even the presence of his viceroys would not necessarily imply, for example in Taxila or Ujjain, the extinction of the local dynasty. It has been acutely remarked by Lassen<sup>2</sup> that in a number of cases Megasthenes states the military power of particular provinces; and he infers that these are instances of independent rule. The inference may have been carried too far; but it has an undeniable validity as regards the kingdoms south of the Vindhya mentioned by Megasthenes, namely the Andhras and Kalingas, as well as their western neighbours the Bhojas, Pētēnikas, and Rishṭikas, who all down to the time of Chandragupta's grandson Aśoka remained outside the regular administration. The districts beyond the Indus, Gandhāra, Arachosia, and Kābul were similarly frontier states.

<sup>1</sup> *Mbh.* xii, 87, 33, and ch. 121; cf. 130, 36; Hopkins, *J.A.O.S.*, xiii, pp. 116, 135-6.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.* ii, pp. 219-20.

## CHAPTER XIX

### POLITICAL AND SOCIAL ORGANISATION OF THE MAURYA EMPIRE

CONCERNING the condition and organisation of the vast Maurya empire the Greeks have provided us with a considerable body of valuable information : and, as the Arthaçāstra furnishes the means of describing the complete polity existing at the time, its land system, its fiscal system, its administrative system, its law, its social system, with some view of literature and religion, we shall not forgo the opportunity, so rare in Indian history—we must wait for the time of Akbar and the *Ā'in-i-Akbarī*—of dwelling a little on the picture.

As regards the land itself, we may distinguish the forest, the pasture or grazing-ground, and the cultivated area<sup>1</sup>. The forests must have been much more extensive than at present, and they clearly comprised both relatively inaccessible tracts inhabited by wild unsubdued tribes and others which were within the reach of the administration, visited by trappers and hunters, utilised for raw material, reserved for elephant-grounds, state hunting-grounds, parks, and Brāhman settlements. The pasture must have included both large spaces (*vivīta*) occupied by the nomad, tent-dwelling<sup>2</sup> ranchers, who were the direct descendants of the old Vedic tribes<sup>3</sup>, and also more restricted areas in the neighbourhood of the villages. The latter, which then as now were the main feature of the country, had their definite boundaries, their village halls,—no doubt representing the forts of ancient times,—and their independent internal economy. Less, if at all, organised were the stations (*ghosha*)<sup>4</sup>, or hamlets which formed the headquarters of the ranching class.

<sup>1</sup> For references to the chapters or pages of the *Arthaçāstra* which deal with the main topics discussed in this chapter, see the Sanskrit text.

<sup>2</sup> Megasthenes, i, 47 : πάλιν μὲν ἡ κώμην οὐκ οἰκοῦσι, σκηλῆτι γὰρ δὲ βίω χρῶνται.

<sup>3</sup> Hopkins, *J.A.O.S.*, xiii, pp. 79–80, 82–3 ; *The Four Castes*, p. 15. In the *Arthaçāstra* (p. 7) also the Vaiçya seems to be connected with cattle. So in Manu (e.g. viii, 88 and 410) and *Mbh.* (xii, 60, 25).

<sup>4</sup> Hopkins, *op. cit.* p. 77.



Apart from the royal domains, which must have been considerable, the ultimate property in the land appertained, in the sense which has since prevailed, to the king<sup>1</sup>: that is to say, the king was entitled to his revenues therefrom, and in default could replace the cultivator in his holding<sup>2</sup>. This does not preclude alienation or subdivision by the occupier, the royal title persisting through each change. It was the king's business to organise the agricultural productivity by encouraging the surplus population to settle new or abandoned tracts<sup>3</sup>. Irrigation was an object of great solicitude and naturally under the charge of the state, which regulated the supply of water and derived revenue therefrom<sup>4</sup>.

The bulk of the population consisted of actual cultivators, and Megasthenes remarks that their avocation was to such a degree defined (by the rule of caste) that they might be seen peacefully pursuing it in the sight of contending armies<sup>5</sup>. The higher classes in the country had not a landowning, but an official, qualification, being entitled for their maintenance to a defined portion of the revenue. This corresponds to the *jāgīr* system of Musalmān times. The assignment might be the revenue of an estate, a village, a town, or according to circumstances<sup>6</sup>. On a minor scale the same principle was applied to the ranching class, which received for maintenance a proportion of the stock<sup>7</sup>.

Roads were constructed by the royal officers, and at intervals of 'ten stades' were sign-boards noting turnings and distances<sup>8</sup>. The Greeks make special mention of the 'royal route' from the N.W. frontier to Pāṭaliputra<sup>9</sup>. Communications were maintained by couriers, while in the woods roamed trappers and forest-rangers<sup>10</sup>.

Towns were numerous, in so much that the Greeks report as many as two thousand placed under the rule of Porus, and Megasthenes ascribes some thirty to the Andhra country alone<sup>11</sup>. They ranged from the market town (*samgrahana*), serving the

<sup>1</sup> Megasthenes, I, 46: τῆς δὲ χώρας μισθοὺς τελοῦσι τῷ βασιλεῖ διὰ τὸ πᾶσαν τὴν Ἰνδικὴν βασιλικὴν εἶναι, ἰδιώτῃ δὲ μηδενὶ γῆν ἐξείναι κεκτήσθαι· χωρὶς δὲ τῆς μισθώσεως τεράρην εἰς τὸ βασιλικὸν τελοῦσι; cf. Hopkins, *J.A.O.S.*, xiii, pp. 87-8.

<sup>2</sup> *Arth.* 19 (p. 47); cf. W. Foy, *Die königliche Gewalt*, pp. 58-9; Jolly, *Recht und Sitte*, p. 93.

<sup>3</sup> *Cūṇyanivēgaṇa* (Hopkins, *op. cit.* p. 127 n. and *Arth.* 19 *ad init.*).

<sup>4</sup> Megasth. xxxiv, 1; see Chapter xvi, p. 417, and *infra*, p. 437.

<sup>5</sup> Megasth. I, 14: παρὰ δὲ τοῖς τῶν γεωργῶν ἱερῶν καὶ ἀσύλων ἐωμένων οἱ πλησίον τῶν τάξεων γεωργοῦντες ἀνεπαίσθητοι τῶν κινδύνων εἰσιν; cf. I, 44. The *Mahābhārata* (e.g. xii, 69, 83 sqq.) qualifies this picture in practice; see Hopkins, *op. cit.* p. 185.

<sup>6</sup> For details see *Manu*, vii, 118-9; Hopkins, *op. cit.* p. 84.

<sup>7</sup> *Arth.* 46; *Mbh.* xii, 60, 24; Hopkins, *op. cit.* p. 83.

<sup>8</sup> Megasth. xxxiv, 3.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* iv, 3.

<sup>10</sup> *Arth.* 52-3.

<sup>11</sup> *Lvi*, 10. In xxvi the towns are too numerous for counting.

uses of ten villages, through the county towns (*khārvataka* and *dronamukha* at a river's mouth) for 200 or 400 villages, the provincial capital (*sthānīya*, or *Thānā*), the great city (*nagara*, *pura*) or port (*paṭṭana*) to the royal capital (*rājadhānī*), all provided with defences of varying solidity<sup>1</sup>. There were also forts on the frontiers or in special situations, such as in the middle of lakes or swamps, hidden in forests, or perched on heights<sup>2</sup>.

The art of fortification was well understood. As we can learn from the Greek and native descriptions, and as we can see depicted on the monuments of Sānchī and Bhārhut, the great cities were provided with ditches, ramparts, and walls of earth, wood or brick<sup>3</sup>, having battlements, towers, covered ways, salient angles, water-gates, and portcullises, with a wide street running round the interior face. There were guard-houses for troops (*gulma*) in the different quarters. In principle the towns were of rectangular shape and divided into four regions, each under a special official and composed of wards. The houses were generally of wood, and of two or three storeys<sup>4</sup>, the more splendid ones including several courts, one behind the other. There were royal palaces, workshops, store-houses, arsenals, and prisons<sup>5</sup>. The streets were provided with watercourses draining the houses and issuing into the moat: against misuse of them, or of the cemeteries outside, by deposit of rubbish or dead bodies, by loosing animals, by conveyances not under proper charge, by funerals conducted through irregular ways or at unlawful hours, penalties are laid down. The houses were forbidden to have windows overlooking each other, except across the street. The precautions against fire included the provision of vessels of water 'in thousands' in the streets: every householder must sleep in the forepart of his dwelling, and he is under the obligation of rendering assistance in case of fire, while arson is punished by burning alive. The trumpet sounds the beginning and end of the nocturnal interval, during which, except on special occasions<sup>6</sup>, none must stir abroad. Approach to the guard-houses and palaces is prohibited, as also is music at unseasonable times. The city chief reports all incidents, and takes charge of lost and ownerless property.

<sup>1</sup> On these distinctions see *Arth.* p. 46; *Manu*, vii, 70-5; *Mbh.* xii, 86, 5; and Hopkins, *op. cit.* pp. 76-7.

<sup>2</sup> Hopkins, *op. cit.* pp. 177-8 n.

<sup>3</sup> Megasth. xvi; Hopkins, *op. cit.* pp. 174 sqq.

<sup>4</sup> See the plates in Maisey's *Sanchi* and Cunningham's *Stupa of Barhut*.

<sup>5</sup> The Sanskrit terms are *antaḥpura* (or *niçānta*), *karmānta* (-āgāra), *koshṭhāgāra*, *āyudhāgāra*, *bandhanāgāra*.

<sup>6</sup> *Chārārātrī*, 'nights of free movement' (*Arth.* 56, p. 146).

The imperial capital Pāṭaliputra or Kusumapura, the Palibothra of the Greeks, which was situated on the south side of the Ganges, to the east of its confluence with the Son, is described by Megasthenes (*v. sup.* Chapter XVI, p. 411). Its ruins lie for the most part under the modern city of Patna-Bankipore; and part of its ancient rampart has been found *in situ*<sup>1</sup>.

The population, as we learn from Megasthenes<sup>2</sup> in agreement with the indications of the Arthaśāstra, consisted of seven classes, which have been already particularised<sup>3</sup>: there was no transference from one class to another (except that the philosophers, i.e. the Brāhmins, might in case of adversity adopt any profession), nor was marriage between them allowed<sup>4</sup>. These distinctions of function correspond only partially to those of caste, which in fact must have been already much more complicated: and they take no note of special cases, such as riverine and maritime populations.

In the country, except where undertakings such as mines and other works created exceptional conditions, the second and third classes, the husbandmen and the neatherds and shepherds, must have predominated: the village servants<sup>5</sup>, such as the potter, the blacksmith, the carpenter, the barber, would belong to the third. In the towns we hear of labourers, craftsmen, traders, inspectors, and officials<sup>6</sup>. The crafts are numerous<sup>7</sup>, especially those dealing with the precious metals and with textiles. The professions include the doctor, the actor, singer and rhapsodist, the dancer, and the soothsayer<sup>8</sup>. The traders are partly state officials in charge of royal merchandise, or in superintendence of matters connected with prices and sales, partly actual shopkeepers or travelling merchants; and not rare among both classes was the rich *çreshthīn*, or seth, who was an important social factor, and, if a leader in his

<sup>1</sup> Waddell, *Report on the Excavations at Pāṭaliputra* (Calcutta, 1903); Spooner, *Ann. Rep. of the Arch. Sur. of India*, 1912-3, pp. 55-61.

<sup>2</sup> I, 40-53; cf. Arrian, *Indica*, xi-xii.

<sup>3</sup> See Chapter xvi, pp. 409-11. The equivalent terms in Greek and Sanskrit are: (1) φιλόσοφοι, σοφισταί = Brāhmaṇa, śramaṇa, (2) γεωργοί = karshaka, (3) βουκόλοι, ποιμένες, νομέες, θηρευταί = gopāla, śvagarīṇ, vāgurika, mārgāyuka, (4) στρατιῶται, πολεμισταί = bhāṭa, (5) σύμβουλοι, σύνεδροι = mantrin, amātya, mahāmātra, (6) ἔφοροι, ἐπίσκοποι = prativedaka, adhyaksha, satrīn, (7) τεχνίται, δημιουργοί, κάπηλοι = kāru, çilpīn, vaidhaka.

<sup>4</sup> Megasth. I, 53: οὐκ ἔξεστι δὲ γαμεῖν ἐξ ἄλλου μέρους, ἢ προαιρέσεις ἢ τέχνας μεταχειρίζεσθαι, οἷον στρατιώτην ὄντα γεωργεῖν, ἢ τεχνίτην ὄντα φιλοσοφεῖν.

<sup>5</sup> Grāmabhritaka (*Arth.* pp. 47 and 246).

<sup>6</sup> The terms are kāru, çilpīn, vaidhaka, adhyaksha, and yukta.

<sup>7</sup> Megasth. writes (I, 7): εἶναι δ' αὐτοὺς συμβάλει καὶ πρὸς τὰς τέχνας ἐπιστήμονας.

<sup>8</sup> Chikitsaka, kuçīlava, gāyana and vādaka, naṭa or nartaka, and gaṇaka; also vājgīvin 'crier' (?).



guild, received official recognition<sup>1</sup>. In the workshops and the prisons (the latter periodically emptied<sup>2</sup>) artisans were engaged on contract or in penal tasks ; and there is a 'spinning house' for the labour of widows and other helpless or unfortunate women<sup>3</sup>.

Permanent associations in civil life include trader and merchant guilds (*çreṇī*) and clubs (*pūga*)<sup>4</sup> ; but there were also temporary combinations of workmen and others engaged under corporate responsibility for the execution of contracts<sup>5</sup>. Collective obstruction was known and penalised<sup>6</sup>.

Trade<sup>7</sup> was active, various, and minutely regulated. The precious wares comprise many species of gold, silver, spices, and cosmetics from all parts of India ; jewels, including pearls from Southern India, Ceylon, and beyond the sea ; skins from Central Asia and China ; muslin, cotton, and silk from China and Further India. The best horses came, as now, from the Indus countries and beyond. The merchant was mulcted in dues at the frontier<sup>8</sup>, by road-taxes and tolls, and by octroi at the gates of the cities, where the royal officials maintained a douane and watch-house<sup>9</sup> : he was required to be armed with a passport<sup>10</sup>, and severe penalties were attached to malpractices in connexion therewith. The officials record in writing 'who the merchants are, whence they come, with what merchandise, and where it has been visé'd.' The country produce also was subject to octroi upon entry, and, to ensure that nothing might escape, there were prohibitions of purchase in part or in bulk at the place of origin in farms, orchards, and gardens<sup>11</sup>. The amount and price of all goods was declared, and the sale was by auction, any enhancement accruing to the treasury. Combinations to affect prices were punishable<sup>12</sup> ; an army of spies was engaged on the routes in order to detect false declarations<sup>13</sup>. The prices of ordinary goods were fixed and proclaimed daily by the officials<sup>14</sup>. Similarly all weights and measures were subject to in-

<sup>1</sup> *Çreṇīmukhya* (Hopkins, *op. cit.*, pp. 81—2; Fick, *Die Sociale Gliederung*, pp. 166—8).

<sup>2</sup> *Arth.* p. 146.

<sup>3</sup> *Arth.* 40 (*sūtrādhyaksha*).

<sup>4</sup> A *pūga* is defined as 'an association of persons of different caste and unspecified profession for purposes of business or pleasure.' On *çreṇī* see Hopkins, *op. cit.* pp. 81—2; acc. to Foy, *op. cit.* p. 14 n., it was a subdivision of a caste.

<sup>5</sup> *Arth.* 66 (*Sam̐bhūyasamutthāna*); cf. also 76—7; Manu, viii, 211.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* p. 204.

<sup>7</sup> For various kinds of merchandise, see Hopkins, *op. cit.* p. 91 n.

<sup>8</sup> One fifth of the value acc. to *Arth.* 40.

<sup>9</sup> *çulkaśthāna*, *ghaṭikāśthāna* (*ibid.* p. 110).

<sup>10</sup> *mudrā* (*ibid.* 52).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* 40.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* p. 204.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 111—2.

<sup>14</sup> Hopkins, *op. cit.* p. 130 n. Every five days or every fortnight acc. to Manu, viii, 401—2.

spection<sup>1</sup>. There were export, as well as import duties and octrois, and certain classes of goods were forbidden to be introduced or sent abroad respectively. The king himself was a great trader, disposing of the output of his factories, workshops, and prisons, and the produce of his lands, forests, and mines, for which he maintained store-houses (*koshthāgāra*) through the country<sup>2</sup>. In particular he reserved the right of coining and other work in silver and gold, which was executed by his officials on behalf of those who brought their raw metal<sup>3</sup>.

The state of society corresponding to this activity of trade, to the traffic on high roads (*rājapatha* 'routes royales') and by-roads (*banikpatha* 'merchant roads'), the bustle at frontiers, ferries, tolls, and city-gates, and to the minute regulation of all these, must have been one of considerable complexity. Nor do we lack the means, literary or illustrative, of becoming in part acquainted with it. Beside the statements of the Greek writers, we may gather abundant material from the Pāli books of the Buddhist canon<sup>4</sup>, from the Arthaśāstra and the code of Manu, from Patañjali's commentary upon the grammar of Pāṇini, and from the Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata; while the Buddhist *stūpas* of Sāncī and Bhārhut supply ocular demonstrations of much that is recorded in the literature. But from this material large deductions must be made: the Sanskrit Epics, and in a less degree the books of the Pāli canon, reflect the circumstances of an earlier period—irrespective of the actual dates of composition—and we run the risk of confusing conditions as widely different as those of the Homeric, the Solonian, and the Periclean age in Greece. If we seek to elicit the special features of the Maurya epoch, we shall mark first of all the growth of luxury consequent upon the rise of the great Magadha empire in the east: in the Punjab, no doubt, in spite of the effeminacy which the Greeks observed in the court of Porus, the old tribal system was still prevalent. There the actual cultivator would still be a man of the three upper classes, while in the east he was generally a Çūdra. It is to this period, no doubt, that we must ascribe the great complexity of the caste system, and the beginning of the association of caste with craft. It seems not doubtful that a number of castes did arise, according to the Brāhman theory, by intermixtures of the old four divisions,

<sup>1</sup> *Arth.* 37 (*Tulāmānapotava*).

<sup>2</sup> *Manu*, viii, 399; Kohler, *Altindisches Prozessrecht*, p. 54; Foy, *op. cit.* pp. 51-2, 61; Jolly, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-1. The king's trade-agent is *rājavaiḍehaka*.

<sup>3</sup> *Arth.* 31-2.

<sup>4</sup> See Chapter viii, and Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, iii-vi.

which still formed the basis: a process natural in itself, when intermarriage between the different classes was still licit, and certain to be specifically noted, while it is evidenced not only by the testimony of the theological works, but also by so worldly a treatise as the *Arthaśāstra*. But it is only in a few cases that we find a particular occupation assigned to a particular caste<sup>1</sup>.

In another respect the old system of caste had received a shock. To the contemporaries of Buddha and Mahāvira the conception of a king who was not of the Kshatriya order would have seemed preposterous. But the Mauryas were of low extraction, as were the Nandas whom they succeeded. Henceforth the spectacle of the low-born man in power was never a rarity in India; and soon it was the foreigner. The vast empire, with its army of officials and spies, introduced a bureaucratic rule in place of the old quasi-feudal system.

Foreign influences also begin to assert themselves. In the stone architecture, which replaces wood in public monuments, as also in the style of the edicts of Aśoka we have clear evidence of intercourse with Persia, which must necessarily have begun well before the fourth century<sup>2</sup>. And this advance in art affected religion also by its encouragement of image-worship<sup>3</sup>.

As regards daily life, we find the public side of it sufficiently gay. The people were frugal in their diet, and sober, except on occasion of festivals. The chief display of luxury was in dress<sup>4</sup>. The inns, hostelries, eating-houses, serais, and gaming-houses are evidently numerous; sects and crafts have perhaps their meeting places and the latter their public dinners<sup>5</sup>. The business of entertainment provides a livelihood for various classes of dancers, singers, and actors<sup>6</sup>. Even the villages are visited by them, and the author of the *Arthaśāstra* is inclined to discourage the existence of a common hall used for their shows as too great a distraction from the life of the home and the fields<sup>7</sup>. At the same time there are penalties for refusal to assist in organising public entertainment. The king provides in amphitheatres constructed for the occasion dramatic, boxing, and other contests of men and animals, and also

<sup>1</sup> *Arth.* 60.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapters xiv, pp. 329, 341; xxvi, pp. 621—2; Fergusson, *Hist. of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, index, s.v. Persepolitan Capitals; Vincent Smith, *History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon*, pp. 58 sqq.; Grünwedel, *Buddhistische Kunst in Indien*, pp. 17 sqq. and Ch. II.

<sup>3</sup> Konow, *Ind. Ant.*, 1909, pp. 145–9.

<sup>4</sup> Megasth. xxvii, 8–9.

<sup>5</sup> *Arth.* 56.

<sup>6</sup> Hopkins, *op. cit.* pp. 118, 176.

<sup>7</sup> *Arth.* 19 (p. 48).



spectacles with displays of pictured objects of curiosity<sup>1</sup>—no doubt the private showman with his pictures of Hades, etc., was also active—; and not seldom the streets were lighted up for festivals and it was not penal to stir abroad. Then there were also the royal processions, when His Majesty went forth to view his city or to hunt<sup>2</sup>.

In domestic life the joint-family system prevails: but it can be dissolved. Boy and girl attain their majority at the age of sixteen and of twelve respectively<sup>3</sup>. Adoption—legitimated by the king—is common. There are the four regular and four irregular forms of marriage, which is dissoluble by mutual consent or prolonged absence<sup>4</sup>. The wife has her dowry and her ornaments, sometimes also her bride-gift, which are her private property and to a certain extent at her disposal in case of widowhood. Ill-usage on either side is punishable. Upon failure of male issue the husband may after a certain period take other wives (of any class); but he is required to render justice to all: on the other hand, a widow is at liberty to marry again. Orphans are under the guardianship of their relatives<sup>5</sup>. The poor and helpless old, and in particular the families of soldiers and workmen dying during their employment, are regarded as deserving the king's care<sup>6</sup>. Concerning the *ganikās*, or public women, who were the king's servants, and whose practice and rights were subject to minute regulation, the Greek writers have told us enough<sup>7</sup>. Offences against women of all kinds are severely visited, including the actions of officials in charge of workshops and prisons; and their various imprudences and lapses are subject to a gradation of fines and penalties<sup>8</sup>. Refractory wives may be beaten (Manu, VIII, 299).

In totally denying slavery Megasthenes went too far<sup>9</sup>: in fact seven kinds of slaves are enumerated<sup>10</sup>: but it is laid down that no *Ārya* ('freeman,' here including the *Çūdra*) could be enslaved. A man might sell himself into slavery, and in times of distress children might be so provided for: also there were captives in

<sup>1</sup> See Hardy in *Album Kern*, pp. 61–6, and Açoka's Rock Edict, iv; also Manu, ix, 84 and 223, and Hopkins, *op. cit.* pp. 124–5.

<sup>2</sup> Megasth. xxvii, 16–7: ἐρέρα δ' ἐστὶν ἡ ἐπὶ τὰς θυσίας ξεῖδος· τριτὴ δ' ἐπὶ θήραν βακχική τις. Cf. Hopkins, *op. cit.* pp. 119–20.

<sup>3</sup> *Arth.* p. 154.

<sup>4</sup> Concerning marriage see *Arth.* 59. Manu, ix, 76 (absence); ix, 97 (bride-gift).

<sup>5</sup> Manu, viii, 27.

<sup>6</sup> *Arth.* 19 (p. 47), 91 (p. 246); *Mbh.* xii, 86, 24.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *Arth.* 44.

<sup>8</sup> *Arth.* pp. 114, 146, chap. 87. The offence of killing a woman is equal to that of killing a Brāhman: see Hopkins, *The Four Castes*, p. 98; Jolly, *op. cit.* pp. 116–7.

<sup>9</sup> See Chapter xvi, p. 416; and *Arth.* 65.

<sup>10</sup> Manu, vii, 415.

war. In all cases the slave may purchase his freedom by any earnings acquired irrespective of his master's service, and ransom from outside cannot be refused. The slave woman who is taken to her master's bed thereby acquires freedom, as also do her children.

The progress of literature during the Maurya period is unfortunately for the most part matter for inference. Only three works, all in their way important, can with certainty be dated in or near it: these are the *Arthaśāstra* of Chāṇakya, the *Mahābhāṣya*, Patañjali's commentary on the grammatical *Sūtras* of Pāṇini, and the Pāli *Kathāvatthu*. The Vedic period, including the *Brāhmaṇas* and the early Upanishads, was prior to Buddha, and the same may be said in principle of the *Sūtras*, or manuals of rites, public and domestic, the *Vedāṅgas*, treatises on grammar, phonetics, prosody, astronomy, etymology, ritual, whatever may be the date of the treatises which have come down to us. Nor can the like be denied regarding the various forms of quasi-secular literature which are named in works of about this period, the *Purāṇa*, or myth, the *Itivṛtta*, or legend, *Ākhyāyikā*, or tale, *Vākovākya*, or dialogue<sup>1</sup>. Some form of the *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa*, the former of which we infer from Megasthenes to have been current during this period, belongs also to an earlier epoch. One philosophical system, the *Sāṅkhya*, seems to be prior to Buddhism: a second, the *Vaiśeṣika*, may have arisen in our period<sup>2</sup>. Finally, the canon of the Pāli Buddhism and also that of the Jains, which is said to have been fixed at Pāṭaliputra in 313 (312) B.C., and the system of the *Lokāyatas* or *Ājīvikas*, are also in substance pre-Maurya<sup>3</sup>.

If we may conjecturally assign to this period any definite literary forms, these would be the *śāstra* and the artificial poetry, or *kāvya*. The former, the most characteristic product of the Indian mind, is the formal exposition of a particular science in dogmatic enunciations accompanied by a discussion (*bhāṣya*). Such are the grammatical work of Patañjali, the *Arthaśāstra* of Chāṇakya, the *Kāmaśāstra* of Vātsyāyana: the *Dharma Śāstra*, or Law, followed an older model, that of the metrical treatise, and the *Nyāya Śāstra*, or Logic, is a later creation. We cannot doubt also that many of the minor sciences (*vidyās*) and arts (*kalās*), which were from earlier times a subject of instruction, had already attained some systematic literary form<sup>4</sup>. As regards the artificial

<sup>1</sup> Lists are given in the *Mahābhārata* (see Hopkins, *J.A.O.S.*, xiii, p. 112).

<sup>2</sup> It is known to Aṇvaghoṣa (*Sūtrālaṅkāra*) in the first century A.D.

<sup>3</sup> See Jacobi, *Kalpasūtra*, Introduction.

<sup>4</sup> A number of these are mentioned in the *Brahmajāla Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*.

epic, it is true that we have no positive evidence of its existence in Maurya times. But the *Buddhacharita* of Aṣvaghosha, which dates from the first century A.D., presents a perfect and stereotyped form, indicating a long preparation.

That writing was in common use not only for literary purposes, but also in public business, the edicts of Aṣoka exist to prove. But this is by no means all. Epistolary correspondence was perfectly usual<sup>1</sup>, and written documents were employed in the courts of law<sup>2</sup>; moreover, the administration was versed in book-keeping and registration on a large scale and systematically arranged<sup>3</sup>. And we have already the beginnings of a study of style and a vocabulary of exegesis<sup>4</sup>.

Sanskrit remained the language of the Brāhman schools, of public and private ritual, and also of secular literature, except perhaps in the case of folk poesy<sup>5</sup>. In the life of every day and also in administration, furthermore in the sectarian books of the Buddhists and Jains, a vernacular was employed; and from the Edicts of Aṣoka three such vernaculars are known, one of which, that of Magadha, probably profited by its central position at the headquarters of the empire to encroach upon the others<sup>6</sup>. The Sanskrit was perhaps favoured in cultured circles, and especially in the cities; and social ambition, hampered by insufficient training, began to foster a hybrid form of speech, now known as 'mixed Sanskrit,' which subsequently established itself as a literary medium in certain Buddhist schools, when the canonical vernaculars, themselves by no means dialectically pure, had already become stereotyped<sup>7</sup>.

We shall not trespass further on the province of the historian of language and literature. Nor need we dwell at length upon the likewise special topics of religion and law. Nevertheless there is an aspect of these which appertains to general history.

There can be little doubt that the Maurya empire began with

<sup>1</sup> *Arth.* 28; also pp. 29 and 38. Strabo (xv, 67 and 73) mentions writing on cloth.

<sup>2</sup> Megasthenes denies written laws. Written documents are well avouched; see *Manu*, viii, 168.

<sup>3</sup> See below, pp. 487-8. In *Arth.* p. 62, we hear of a Record Room (*nibandhapustakasthāna*) in the Treasury.

<sup>4</sup> *Arth.* 28 and 180.

<sup>5</sup> On this subject see the discussion in *J.R.A.S.* (1913), and *reff.*; also Prof. Jacobi's paper *Was ist Sanskrit?* in *Scientia*, xiv.

<sup>6</sup> Senart, *Inscriptions de Piyadasi*, II, pp. 434-5.

<sup>7</sup> The priority of the Pāli style is clearly shown by Prof. Oldenberg, *G.G.N.*, 1912, pp. 156 sqq.



a Brāhman, as well as a national, reaction<sup>1</sup>. The age of Buddha was one in which religious speculation was rife. Originally a product of the Brāhman hermitages, it had offered irresistible attractions to a people wearied of ritual formality. Innumerable sects arose; it became a common understanding<sup>2</sup> that from any class a man could go forth, abandoning his home, and found or join a sect of wandering disputants or ascetics. The Greek writers combine with the Buddhist and Jain books and the edicts of Aśoka in testifying to the ubiquity of the *pravrajitas* or *çramaṇas* (Gk. *σαρμᾶναι*, *σαρμαναῖοι*)<sup>3</sup>. We cannot doubt that this would in the end constitute a danger to the established order and an offence to the Brāhman caste. The Brāhman, in the Vedic age a priest, had long ceased to be primarily so. It is true that in public and private ritual the priestly function was his, and he was entitled to the emoluments thereof: also the Purohita, or king's spiritual adviser, was one of the highest and most indispensable officers of state. It was, moreover, customary to consult the forest-dwelling Brāhmans upon high political matters<sup>4</sup>, and in the law-courts the sacred law was stated by Brāhman assessors<sup>5</sup>. Nevertheless, as has been well said, the Brāhman was not a person who fulfilled a sacred function—in particular, the service of a temple has always been regarded as demeaning him—but a person who *was* sacred. He was exempt from taxation and confiscation, from corporal chastisement and the death penalty, branding and banishment being in his case the *ultima ratio*<sup>6</sup>. His true office was study and teaching, and his proper abode was the forest hermitage, where he maintained the sacred fires and lived for another world. An order such as this, established in customary respect and daily observance, was obviously threatened by the intervention of proselitising sects of *impromptu* origin, making claims upon the livelihood of the people, and interposing in formal and informal gatherings with fundamental problems. We can therefore well understand why the Arthaśāstra (Chap. 19) forbids the practice of abandoning domestic life without formal sanction and without provision for wife and family; and we look forward with confidence to the great doctrine of the Bhagavadgītā, that grand pillar of Brāhmanism, that salva-

<sup>1</sup> Lassen, *op. cit.* II, p. 213.

<sup>2</sup> See *Mbh.* XII, 63, 23; Megasth. XXXII, 12; and Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, pp. 141 sqq.

<sup>3</sup> Rock Edict, XIII; Megasth. XII, 19. The *ὁλόβοι* are the Sanskrit *vānaprasthas*.

<sup>4</sup> Megasth. XLIII, 19; *Mbh.* XII, 86, 26.

<sup>5</sup> Manu, VIII, 10; Hopkins, *op. cit.* p. 159.

<sup>6</sup> *Arth.* p. 220; Manu, VIII, 123-4, 380; *Mbh.* XII, 56, 32-3; Megasth. I, 40.

tion is attainable not by the rejection of civil duty, but in and above the performance of it. Accordingly we see in the Maurya age the beginning of a stage of concentration, in which only a few great sects could maintain themselves by the side of a settled Brāhman orthodoxy. And this was a natural corollary of a great empire.

Among the Brāhman deities the greatest share of popular adoration accrued to Īiva and Viṣṇu (under the form of Kṛiṣṇa), whom the Greeks report to us as Dionysus and Heracles respectively<sup>1</sup>. With the former was associated Skanda or Viçākha, the god of war. The Buddhist books and sculptures, which give the preference to Brahmā and Indra, are in this respect archaïsing. Īiva was specially worshipped in the hill regions<sup>2</sup>; of the Viṣṇu cult the great centre was Mathurā<sup>3</sup>, the second home of the Kṛiṣṇa legend, which first arose in Western India. The Jains were probably still mostly to be found in Bihār and Ujjain, while the Buddhist expansion had perhaps even in the lifetime of the founder attained a far wider range.

Of law the bases are defined as, in ascending order of validity, sacred precept (*dharma*), agreement (*vyavahāra*), custom (*charitra*), and royal edicts (*rājaçāsana*)<sup>4</sup>, and the subject is expounded rationally, not theologically. Civil law is treated under the heads of marriage and dowry, inheritance, housing and neighbourhood (including trespass), debt, deposit, slaves, labour and contract, sale, violence and abuse, gaming, and miscellanea<sup>5</sup>. Cases were heard—in the morning—before a triad of officials together with three Brāhman exponents of law<sup>6</sup>; and there were rules as to the circumstances in which agreements were valid, and as to procedure in court, with plea, counterplea, and rejoinder<sup>7</sup>. We learn from various sources that cases were commonly disposed of locally by reference to a body of arbitrators (*pañchāyat*), permanent or constituted *ad hoc*, or by the officials of various grades; and there was a system of appeals as far as the king, who was regularly present in court or represented by a minister (*prād-vivāka*). Offences against caste or religion were tried by committees entitled *parishads*. Trials by wager or ordeal were also common. The penalties, reasonably graduated and executed by

<sup>1</sup> Megasth. I, 29-37; L.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* I, 33; L.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* L, 13.

<sup>4</sup> *Arth.* 58 (p. 150). Custom includes the customs of villages, gilds, and families (Manu, VIII, 41). For a general survey of the history of law and legal institutions see Chapter XII.

<sup>5</sup> *Arth.* 57-75. Manu (VIII, 3 sqq.) mentions 18 heads of legal action.

<sup>6</sup> *Arth.* 57; Manu, LIV, 10. In Manu VIII, 60, three witnesses are the minimum.

<sup>7</sup> *Arth.* 57.

royal authority, include fines (these, and also debts, often commutable for forced labour<sup>1</sup>), whipping, mutilation, and death with or without torture. In cases of assault the principle familiar in the modern proverb 'first at the Thānā' is already known, but disputed<sup>2</sup>.

Under the title 'clearing of thorns'<sup>3</sup> are included criminal law, political offences, in particular misconduct on the part of officials, and the general business of police. Among the cases contemplated we may cite theft, murder, burglary or forcible entry, poisoning, coining, injury to property, criminal negligence, contumelious violation of caste rules<sup>4</sup>, boycott and other acts of employees, combinations to affect prices, fraud in regard to weights and measures. In all these matters the magistrates (*pradeshtri*, revenue and police officers) were assisted by an army of spies and *agents-provocateurs*, who in times of fiscal difficulty were also empowered to adopt the most reprehensible expedients for squeezing the well-to-do<sup>5</sup>. If the Greek writers are to be trusted when they report a rarity of offences among the Indians<sup>6</sup>, this was plainly not due to a state of innocence even as regards elaborate criminal acts.

We now come to the matter of government and administration, which we may treat with a little more system.

Beginning with the civil administration and at its base, we find already in operation that system of village autonomy under the headman (*grāmanī*, an official nominee), which has prevailed in India at all periods. Through him, no doubt, there was a joint responsibility for the assignment and payment of the land revenue, and consequently for the proper cultivation of the fields, which failing, the occupier might be replaced by the village servants<sup>7</sup>. In consultation with the elders, the village *pañchāyat*, he would also decide all questions relating to the customary rights and duties of the village barber, washerman, potter, blacksmith, and so on. His superiors were the *gopa* in charge of five or ten villages and *sthānika* theoretically ruling one quarter of the realm<sup>8</sup>, each attended by executive, revenue, and police officials. By some texts<sup>9</sup> further official gradations are recognised, and in the edicts of Aśoka the highest local officials, set over hundreds of

<sup>1</sup> Manu, VIII, 177 (debt), IX, 229 (fines).

<sup>2</sup> *Arth.* 73 (p. 196).

<sup>3</sup> *Arth.* 76-88.

<sup>4</sup> Manu, VII, 267 sqq.

<sup>5</sup> *Arth.* 90; *Mbh.* XII, 130, 36.

<sup>6</sup> Megasth. XXVII.

<sup>7</sup> *Arth.* 19 (p. 47).

<sup>8</sup> *Arth.* 19.

<sup>9</sup> Manu, VII, 115; *Mbh.* XII, 87, 2 sqq.; Hopkins, *op. cit.* p. 84.



thousands of persons, are termed *rājūkas*, a designation pointing, no doubt, to functions connected with survey, land settlement, and irrigation<sup>1</sup>. The superior of all these, to whom they reported successively, was one of the great ministers of state, the *samāhartri*, or Minister of the Interior and Chancellor of the Exchequer.

This important official<sup>2</sup> dealt with the whole income of the state, including that of the Royal domains. The main heads are (1) the proportion of the produce of land, which in India accrues immemorially to the king in lieu of rent, (2) the minor dues and cesses connected therewith<sup>3</sup>, (3) the special income from irrigated land, and that from pastures, forests, mines, and other works, (4) the customs at the frontiers, the transport dues at ferries, etc., the road dues and tolls, the octroi at the city gates, the profits of coinage, and the various profits consequent upon the methods of sale, (5) the fees exacted as licences from workmen, craftsmen, traders and professionals, gaming houses and passports<sup>4</sup>, (6) the fines derived from the law courts, also ownerless property<sup>5</sup>, and (7) special taxes, as it were tithes, for religious objects. In times of straitness there were also 'benevolences'<sup>6</sup> exacted, but in theory only once, from the well-to-do. Under expenditure we understand without difficulty the maintenance of the sovereign and his court, the salaries—which the *Arthaśāstra* (Chap. 91) carefully defines—of the ministry and the vast army of minor officials and spies, religious provisions, the demands of the army and its equipment, including forts, the expense of mines, forests, etc., and of public works such as roads, irrigation, etc., which was regarded as the function of the state, the maintenance of the families of slain soldiers, officials dying during employment, and finally of helpless persons<sup>7</sup>. We have here matter for the work of a large establishment and an elaborate clerical system; and we learn in fact from

<sup>1</sup> Bühler, *Z.D.M.G.*, XLVII, pp. 466 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> *Arth.* 24 and 54; Manu, VII, 60.

<sup>3</sup> See Manu, VII, 127 sqq. The normal proportion is one-sixth; see Hopkins, *The Four Castes*, p. 77. But one-fourth in addition to rent is mentioned by Megasthenes (*v. sup.* p. 475, n. 1). The mention of rent is contrary to our Indian information and constitutes a problem.

<sup>4</sup> *Arth.* 52; Manu, VII, 137-8.

<sup>5</sup> *Arth.* 60; Manu, VIII, 30-8; Hopkins, *op. cit.* pp. 122-3.

<sup>6</sup> *Pranaya* or *pṛiti* (to be demanded only once): see *Arth.* 90, Hopkins, *op. cit.* pp. 78, 86, 90-1.

<sup>7</sup> *Arth.* 19 (p. 47), 91 (p. 246); *Mbh.* XII, 77, 18, 86, 24; Hopkins, *J.A.O.S.*, XIII, p. 107. Stolen property, if untraced, was also to be made good by the State; cf. *Mbh.* XII, 75, 10.

the Arthaśāstra (Chaps. 25-7) that the business of the Treasury was carefully and minutely organised, with distinctions of current, recurrent, occasional, and other expenditure and various checks. Moreover, both in town and country the various grades of officials maintained full registers both of property and of the population<sup>1</sup>. Thus the bifurcating roots of a vast administration—no doubt more effective in theory than in practice—connected the individual taxpayer with the crown.

Another important minister was the *sannidhātṛi*, or Minister of Works<sup>2</sup>, who had charge of storehouses, treasuries, prisons, armouries, warehouses and the like. An interesting item in his duties was the maintenance of a rain-gauge<sup>3</sup>. We shall not dwell upon the *pradeshṭṛi*<sup>4</sup>, or head of the executive revenue and judicial service, or the *praçāstṛi*, or Minister of Correspondence, who was responsible for the drafting of decrees and royal letters<sup>5</sup>, nor, of course, upon the numerous *adhyakshas*, or superintendents, the Episcopi of the Greek writers, in charge of minor departments. The other great officers of state were the *dauvārīka*, Chamberlain or Master of the Ceremonies, the *āntarvaṃçika* or Head of the Bodyguard, and the four indispensable chiefs who formed the inner cabinet, namely the *mantrin*, i.e. Dīwān or Prime Minister, the *purohita*, or religious adviser, the *senāpati*, or Commander-in-Chief, and the *yuvarāja*, or Heir Apparent. In the provinces were the various *antapālas*, or Guardians of Frontiers, and *durgapālas*, or Commanders of Forts, while the great empire of the Mauryas found a place also for the Viceroy (*uparāja*), no doubt attended by his own, minor, court. The functions of ambassadors are clearly recognised, with distinctions of plenipotentiary, envoy, and instructed emissary, and rules for their behaviour are enunciated<sup>6</sup>. The chief ministers were in many cases hereditary and, except in the instance of the Purohita, they would be more often of Kshatriya, than of Brāhman, caste (Manu, VII, 54).

As regards the government of cities, we hear of the mayor (*nāgaraka*)<sup>7</sup>, under whom as in the country districts are *sthānikas* and *gopas*, whose duties similarly include the keeping of registers

<sup>1</sup> *Arth.* 54-6.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 23.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 58.

<sup>4</sup> On his duties see *J.R.A.S.*, 1914, pp. 383-6.

<sup>5</sup> *Arth.* 28.

<sup>6</sup> *Arth.* 12; Manu, VII, 63-7. A list of officials may be seen also in Hopkins, *op. cit.* pp. 128, 129 n.

<sup>7</sup> *Arth.* 56; Manu, VII, 121; *Mbh.* XII, 87, 10. In virtue of his general functions he is entitled, like the premier, *sarvārthachintaka*, 'thinker upon all matters'; cf. Foy, *op. cit.* p. 75.

of persons and property. All inns, hostels, serais, and places of entertainment are under surveillance, and reports are received concerning strangers and frequenters. Then there are the various superintendents of works and dues, of sales, weights and measures, of store-houses and so forth. According to Strabo many of these duties were discharged by boards of five (*pañchāyats*)<sup>1</sup>, and he enumerates six such boards, whose respective functions have already been described in Chapter XVI. No doubt the system varied from place to place, and it may have differed according as the city was capital or provincial, subject to a sovereign or independent (δημοκρατουμένη, αὐτόνομος, as according to Megasthenes<sup>2</sup> most of them had at one time been). We may think of the difference between a royal borough and free town in our own middle ages.

Coming now to the military, we find that the native Indian accounts present a view of the case rather less simple than does Megasthenes<sup>3</sup>.

According to these accounts the military might consist of troops of different kinds, namely hereditary or feudatory troops, hired troops, gild levies, and forest tribes<sup>4</sup>. In the first named, which were regarded as the most trustworthy, we may doubtless recognise the old Kshatriya division of society, connected by caste, and ultimately by race, with the king himself, such as in later times we find them in the quasi-feudal states of Rājputāna. In the second class also the Kshatriya element would probably predominate, though here there would be, no doubt, a career for any bold adventurer with a strong arm and a soldierly bent. As concerns the gild troops, which are plainly regarded as having a chiefly defensive character<sup>5</sup>, there is some room for doubt: were they merely the ordinary trade gilds, as an organisation for calling out the people for service in time of invasion, a sort of militia or *landwehr*? Or were they quasi-military corporations<sup>6</sup>, such as the modern Brīnjāras, whose business was to supply merchants and others with armed protection of a quasi-professional character? While refraining from a decisive pronouncement, we cannot but incline in the circumstances to the former alternative,

<sup>1</sup> xv, C. 708. A *pañchāyat* is mentioned in connexion with town administration in the passage from the Mahābhārata, ap. Hopkins, *op. cit.* p. 85 n.

<sup>2</sup> i, 32; xxxii, 4; xxxiv, 7.

<sup>3</sup> See Chapter xvi, p. 410.

<sup>4</sup> *Arth.* 137; Hopkins, *op. cit.* pp. 185 sqq.

<sup>5</sup> They are for 'short expeditions' and less quickly assembled (*Arth.* pp. 341 and 346); cf. Hopkins, *op. cit.* p. 94; Manu, viii, 41.

<sup>6</sup> On these see *Arth.* 160 (p. 376).



for which the gilds of medieval Europe supply a fair analogy, and which is supported by the defensive character of the force. In any case the gild troops were regarded as in military value inferior to the men-at-arms. The forest tribes, employed like the Red Indians in the French and English wars of North America, or like other untrained auxiliaries in the armies of Greece and Rome, were destined for the service of distracting or detaining the enemy rather than for the actual crises of campaigns<sup>1</sup>.

The main divisions of the army were the elephant corps, the cavalry, and the foot : to which should be added the foragers and camp-followers. There was a scientific distinction of vanguard, centre, rear, wings, reserve, and camp, with elaborate discussions of formations on the march and in battle, attack and defence, and the value and employment of the several arms<sup>2</sup>. Equipment was in considerable variety, including fixed and mobile engines, such as 'hundred-slayers'<sup>3</sup>. Such instruments were, of course, familiar even to the early nations of Mesopotamia, as were also the construction and siege of forts. The Indian forts were, as we have seen, systematically designed, with ditches, ramparts, battlements, covered ways, portcullises, and water-gates ; and in the assault the arts of mining, countermining, flooding mines were employed no less than the devices of diplomacy<sup>4</sup>. In short, the Indians possessed the art of war. If all their science failed them against Alexander, and against subsequent invaders, we may conjecture, in accordance with other aspects of Indian thought, the reason that there was too much of it. In the formation adopted by Porus, the elephants and chariots in front and the infantry in the rear, we may perhaps detect an agreement with the precepts of the books<sup>5</sup>. As regards the ethics of fighting, the Greeks received an impression of something not unchivalrous ; and here too we may recall the written precepts as to fair fighting, not attacking the wounded or those already engaged or the disarmed, and sparing those who surrendered<sup>6</sup>.

It is in foreign policy that we find the culmination of the Indian genius for systematic exposition, the principles being those of Machiavelli<sup>7</sup>. Policy has not large aims ; the mainspring is the

<sup>1</sup> *Arth.* 12 (p. 31) ; *Mbh.* xii, 59, 48.

<sup>2</sup> *Arth.* 107 sqq. ; Manu, vii, 187 sqq. ; Hopkins, *op. cit.* pp. 191 sqq., 201 sqq.

<sup>3</sup> *Arth.* 36 ; Hopkins, *op. cit.* p. 178 n., pp. 293-4 and nn.

<sup>4</sup> *Arth.* 168.

<sup>5</sup> *Arth.* 153-7 ; *Mbh.* xii, 99, 8.

<sup>6</sup> Manu, vii, 90 sqq. ; *Mbh.* xii, 95, 6 sqq. ; Hopkins, *op. cit.* pp. 227 sqq.

<sup>7</sup> *Arth.* 98 sqq. ; Manu, vii, 155 sqq. ; Formichi, *Gl' Indiani e la loro scienza Politica*, pp. 89 sqq.

rivalry of kings and the much applauded desire for glory and imperial rule. Already we find worked out in pedantic detail the not unreasonable principle that the neighbouring state is the enemy and the alternate one the ally. The varying circumstances decide in which of the six *guṇas*, or situations, the monarch finds himself, whether aggressor, defender, or *tertius gaudens*, and to which of the four expedients, war, conciliation, bribery, or dissension, he must have recourse. Here the arts of treachery and overreaching attain a climax: even in war there is a whole science of sowing suspicion among allies, treason in armies, disaffection or revolt in kingdoms (Manu, VII, 199 sqq.; *Mbh.* XII, 103).

Of the polity which we have outlined, the only polity approved by Indian science, the keystone was the sovereign. Even in the Vedic age the prevailing system was monarchical<sup>1</sup>. Nevertheless the Vedas afford evidence of tribes in which the chief authority was exercised by a family, or even, as in the case of the German nations described in the work of Tacitus, by a whole body of nobles, who are actually designated kings<sup>2</sup>. Of such ruling oligarchies the age of Buddha furnishes, as is well known, a number of examples: such were the Mallas of Kusinārā and the Licchavis of Vesālī. To these oligarchical communities the growth of the great kingdoms proved destructive: at the time of Alexander's invasion they had largely disappeared from eastern Hindustān, and in the Punjab also Porus was working for their subjugation<sup>3</sup>. The Arthaśāstra (Chaps. 160-1) has even a policy of compassing their overthrow by internal dissension. Nevertheless, a number of them survived through and after the Maurya empire<sup>4</sup>, and one of them, that of the Mālavas, handed down to later India its first persistent era, the so-called Vikrama era, which is still the common era of northern India.

In the monarchies the king controls the whole administration, and by his spies<sup>5</sup> keeps watch upon every part of it. He is recommended<sup>6</sup> to check his officials by division and frequent change of functions. Nevertheless, the Indian king is no sultan with the sole obligation of satisfying his personal caprice. The origin of royalty is the growth of wickedness and the necessity of chastisement, the virtue of which the Indian writers celebrate with

<sup>1</sup> Zimmer, *Altindisches Leben*, pp. 162 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, pp. 1 sqq.; Jayaswal, *An Introduction to Hindu Polity*, pp. 3 sqq.

<sup>3</sup> Jayaswal, *op. cit.* pp. 1-7.

<sup>4</sup> See Chapter XXI, p. 528.

<sup>5</sup> Classified in *Arth.* 8-9.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* 22 (p. 57), 27 (p. 70).

a real enthusiasm<sup>1</sup>. It is as guardian of the social (including domestic and religious) order and defence against anarchical oppression that the king is entitled to his revenue; failing to perform this duty, he takes upon himself a corresponding share of the national sin<sup>2</sup>. Educated in these precepts among a moralising people, he would have been more than human had he escaped the obsession of this conception of his duties. Hence we not seldom hear on royal, as well as on priestly, lips the expression that the king should be the father of his people<sup>3</sup>.

His education is in philosophy, Vedic lore, business, and the science of polity<sup>4</sup>: he is also to receive the ordinary instruction in mathematics and literature<sup>5</sup>. He must attain to complete control of his passions by consideration of the errors of famous men in the past. He must never be off his guard or lacking in force<sup>6</sup>.

His occupations are mapped out with a minuteness which in the literature is a subject of humorous comment<sup>7</sup>. The day and the night are divided by sundial or water-clock each into eight portions. Aroused by music at the end of the sixth nocturnal hour, he receives the salutations of his Purohita and others, and interviews the doctors and kitchen officials: then he reflects upon the principles of polity and forms his plans, after which he sends out his secret emissaries, and hears reports of his military and financial advisers. Next comes the hour for appearing in the Audience Hall or in the Law Courts<sup>8</sup>, and considering the affairs of the public, which has free admission. After this the king retires for his bath and repast; and this is also the time for religious devotions. The interval passed, he receives those who bring gifts, interviews his inspectors, corresponds by letter with his ministers, and makes plans of espionage. The sixth hour having now arrived, he takes his ease and reconsiders his policy. In the seventh and eighth hours, the cool of the day, he inspects his horses, elephants, and arsenal, and consults with the Commander-in-Chief: at sunset he performs the usual religious ceremony. The

<sup>1</sup> *Mbh.* xii, 59 and 121-2; Manu, vii, 14 sqq.; Hopkins, *op. cit.* pp. 135 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Hopkins, *op. cit.* p. 78.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 113 sqq.; Manu, vii, 80.

<sup>4</sup> *Arth.* 1; Manu, vii, 43.

<sup>5</sup> The king Khāravela of Kalinga is educated in writing, arithmetic, law, and all sciences. Cf. *Arth.* 2 and Hopkins, *op. cit.* pp. 108 sqq.

<sup>6</sup> Energy, *utthāna*, 'alertness' (Hopkins, *op. cit.* p. 125), is the favourite word.

<sup>7</sup> See also Chapter xvi, p. 416. *Arth.* 16; Manu, vii, 145 sqq., 217 sqq.; Hopkins, *op. cit.* pp. 129 sqq.; Formichi, *op. cit.* pp. 65 sqq. For the humorous comment see *Daśakumāracharita*, viii, *sub. init.*

<sup>8</sup> Megasth. xxvii, 16.



first hour of night brings in the reports of spies. Then come the second bath and meal, followed by religious meditation. To the sound of music His Majesty retires for rest.

The palace<sup>1</sup> is a walled building, with the women's apartments, gardens, and tanks in the rear. In front of these is the innermost court, where the king on awakening is saluted by the various domestic officials, and, according to Aelian (XIII, 22) also by an elephant. The next is the station of a sham body-guard of dwarfs, hunchbacks, wild men, etc.; while the outermost of all, communicating with the exterior, is occupied by an armed retinue, and by ministers and connexions.

Everything bespeaks precaution. The structure of the palace itself includes mazes, secret and underground passages, hollow pillars, hidden staircases, collapsible floors. Against fire, poisonous animals, and other poisons there is diverse provision, including trees which snakes avoid, parrots and *çārikā* birds which cry out on seeing a serpent, other birds which are variously affected by the sight of poison. Everyone has his own apartments, and none of the interior officials are allowed to communicate with the outside. The women are carefully watched by attendants, male and female; not even their relatives are admitted to them, except in time of childbirth or illness. All employees coming from without, such as nautch women, undergo bath and massage and change their dress before admission. Material objects, as they pass in and out, are placed on record and under seal. According to Megasthenes (XXVII, 15), the king changes his apartment *every night*.

The kitchen is in a secret place, and there is a multitude of tasters. The signs of poison in the viands and in the demeanour of the persons are carefully noted. Medicaments must pass similar tests. The instruments of the shampooer and others must be handled by the body-guard, and the persons themselves bathed, etc.: articles of ornament and apparel are inspected by female slaves; cosmetics, etc., are first tried on those who apply them. If actors are admitted, the orchestra and other appurtenances separate them from the spectator. The king rides or drives in the company of high officials. When he embarks upon a ship, the same is the case; no other vessel must be near, and troops are stationed on the shore. Similar precautions attend the hunt. Foreign emissaries are received in *durbār*, and the king inspects his troops armed and mounted on elephant or horse. In his progresses the roads are

<sup>1</sup> *Arth.* 17-18.

lined on both sides by police who keep away all armed persons, ascetics, and cripples: he never enters a crowd<sup>1</sup>. Should he take part in a procession, banquet, festival, or wedding, it is in full retinue.

The question of grown-up princes—that problem of polygamous sovereignties—receives careful consideration: for princes, like crabs, devour their parents<sup>2</sup>. Shall they be kept at hand, or aloof? if the latter, shall it be in a specified locality, in a frontier fort, in a foreign country, in rustic seclusion? or finally, shall they be put out of the way? In any case, they are to be under surveillance, and at need betrayed by *agents-provocateurs*. The good son is to be made Commander-in-Chief or Heir Apparent, and in general the eldest is to be preferred. But a single son, if misbehaving, must by some expedient be replaced. The Arthaśāstra even contemplates a joint-family sovereignty, as exempt from the difficulties attending succession<sup>3</sup>.

It would seem that the states contemplated by the Indian science of Polity are of moderate extent. With the great empires, and in particular with that of the Mauryas, comes in the institution of Viceroys, or *uparājas*<sup>4</sup>, for example at Ujjain and Taxila. It has been suggested that it was the Alexandrian invasion that gave the impetus to the foundation of a single sovereignty embracing the greater part of India. This is sufficiently refuted by the facts: and indeed the conception of a Universal Emperor is quite familiar in the Vedic period: we may even believe that the conception was brought into India by the Āryans, who must have known of the great Mesopotamian powers. If we must seek for any foreign influence in Maurya times, we should think rather of the Achaemenids, whose dominions extended to the Indus. As is well known (*v. sup.* p. 480), the architecture of the period, and also the style of Aśoka's edicts, show definite traces of Persian influence; and the expressions 'the king's eye' and 'the king's ear,' occurring in the Arthaśāstra (pp. 175 and 328), seem to furnish literary indications pointing in the same direction.

<sup>1</sup> *Arth.* 18 (p. 45).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 13-4.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 14; cf. Hopkins, *op. cit.* p. 139 n.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Fick, *op. cit.* p. 86.

## CHAPTER XX

### AÇOKA, THE IMPERIAL PATRON OF BUDDHISM

THE son and successor of Chandragupta is in Buddhist literature known as Bindusāra, whereas the Purāṇas give the name Nandasāra or Bhadrasāra: in such a matter the Buddhist testimony would have superior authority. The Greeks use instead of the name a title, Amitrochates = Sanskrit *Amitraghāta*, 'slayer of the foe,' a form which is quoted, perhaps with reference to this king, in the grammatical work of Patañjali<sup>1</sup>.

From Greek sources we learn concerning Bindusāra only that he was in communication with Seleucus Nicator, from whom he received an envoy named Daīmachus and solicited the purchase of sweet wine, figs, and a philosopher, the last named being refused on the ground that the sale of a sophist was not in accordance with Greek usage<sup>2</sup>. The second Ptolemy, Philadelphus, also dispatched a representative, Dionysius, whose memoirs are unfortunately not preserved.

The Purāṇas attribute to Bindusāra a reign of twenty-five years, the Pāli books one of twenty-seven or twenty-eight. Whether he earned, or merely assumed, his soubriquet, we do not learn; but it is clear that he maintained intact the dominions inherited from Chandragupta. He had to deal with disaffection in Taxila, a city which was also to give trouble to his successor. It was allayed by the despatch of that destined successor, his son Açoka<sup>3</sup>.

The events and occurrences of the life of Açoka, as we know them from the sole trustworthy source, namely his own inscriptions, are as follows. In the ninth year after his coronation he effected the conquest of the Kalinga country, i.e. Orissa with the Ganjām District of Madras. The slaughter and suffering which attended the conquest produced upon his mind such an impression that it proved the turning-point in his career. He joined the Buddhist

<sup>1</sup> *Mahābhāṣya*, III, 2, 88. For 'Αμιτροχάτης (Athenaeus XIV, 67) Strabo has 'Αλλιτροχάδως.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter XVII, p. 433.

*Açokāvadāna* (= *Divyāvadāna*, xxvi), pp. 371 f.



order as a lay disciple, and thus subjected himself to the influence of ideas of which he was destined to be one of the greatest propagators. His active devotion to that faith began, however, two and a half years later, about the end of the eleventh year from his coronation, when he became a member of the *Saigha*, or order of monks, and in that capacity travelled from place to place, like the wandering Buddhist and Jain brothers, displaying energy, as he phrases it<sup>1</sup>. This energy took the form of visits and gifts to Brāhmans, ascetics, and old people, instructions and discussions relating to the Buddhist *Dharma*, or religious rules and principles. At the end of this tour, which he claims to have had important results, not however very clearly indicated, he issued the first of his religious proclamations, an exhortation to his officials to adopt the like principle of energetic action ; and he also orders that his missive should everywhere be engraved upon rocks and on stone pillars, where such existed. The practice of carving Buddhist sentiments in this manner on conspicuous objects was afterwards to receive a very wide extension, as is still visible in Tibet, in Central Asia, in China, and throughout the Buddhist world. During the following two years, the thirteenth and fourteenth, Açoka's activity must have been at its height. He issued no fewer than sixteen missives, of which fourteen are found engraved, in one corpus, in places as far distant as the extremities of his empire, at Gīrnār in Kāthiāwār, at Mānsehra and Shāhbāzgarhī in the Punjab, and twelve of the same with two others at Dhauli and Jaugada in Orissa<sup>2</sup>. In these records, which seem to have been engraved in his fourteenth year, Açoka gives an account of the administrative and other measures which he had adopted. He had been active in causing wells to be dug by the roads, in providing medical aid for men and animals (perhaps a reference to animal hospitals, now known as *Panjroles*), and in propagating medical or useful plants ; and this not only in his own dominions, but in those of the neighbouring, independent and quasi-independent, states of South India and the north-west frontier, nay, even as far as the Greek kingdom of Antiochus and beyond. Then he had made regulations restricting the slaughter of animals for food and especially on occasions of festivals and public shows. He had issued eloquent appeals for kindness and consideration in family relationships, in dealings with Brāhmans and teachers, in the

<sup>1</sup> Edict of Sahasrām, etc.

<sup>2</sup> The Orissa versions omit nos. XI-XIII of the other groups and append two special ones.

mutual attitudes of different sects ; further, he had denounced what he regarded as excess of profitless (i.e. Brāhman) ceremony in public and private life, and had inculcated economy, earnestness, and mutual exhortation. For the gay progresses of his predecessors on their hunting and holiday excursions (see Chapter XVI, pp. 416-7) he had substituted edifying spectacles and pious conferences ; and he had arranged that he should himself always, even in his most private hours, be accessible to urgent calls—a serious inroad upon the strict apportionment of the royal time which we have detailed above (p. 492). Finally, in his thirteenth year he had instituted quinquennial circuits of the leading officials for the purpose of proclaiming the moral law as well as for the discharge of their normal functions. In the fourteenth year he appointed high officials, entitled *dharma-mahāmātras*, with the duty of inculcating piety, redressing misfortune or wrong, organising charitable endowments and gifts. Some of these officers stood in special relation to the establishments, and benevolences, of his various relatives, and the operations of others extended even to the foreign countries to which allusion has been made above.

The next objects of Açoka's solicitude were the unsubdued frontier peoples, and persons in the provinces who had incurred penalties, concerning whom we have the two edicts addressed to his officers at Dhauli and Jaugada in the Kalinga country. Towards both classes he expresses a paternal regard : he is anxious to win the confidence of the borderers ; and, as regards imprisoned persons, he solemnly exhorts his officials to make justice, patience, and forbearance the principles of their action. At the same time he gives instruction for the periodical public recitation of these admonitions, and repeats, for the benefit of the Kalinga officials, his intention of instituting quinquennial circuits. His sons, the Viceroys in Taxila and Ujjain, would follow a similar practice at intervals of three years.

The ensuing period of about twelve years has left little record in documents emanating from the emperor himself. But we may plausibly conjecture that Açoka now entered upon that course of religious foundations which has given him his unique reputation as a builder of Buddhist shrines. Eighty-four thousand religious edifices—a conventional high number in India—are ascribed to him, the chief sites being the places famed as having been visited by Buddha ; and he is said to have redistributed among them the relics of Buddha, which were originally portioned between eight favoured cities. The actual records are not at variance with such

a supposition. We know that in his thirteenth, and again in his twentieth, year he dedicated cave-dwellings in the Barābar hills for the use of monks of the Ājīvika sect. In his fifteenth year he enlarged the *stūpa* of the Buddha Kanakamuni, not far from Kapilavastu ; and during the twenty-first year he personally visited this site and that of Buddha's own birth-place, the garden of Lumbinī, setting up commemorative pillars and in the latter case granting a remission of taxation. In this period would also fall the inscriptions which attest his growing attachment to the Buddhist order and doctrine, that which ordains ecclesiastical penalties for schism<sup>1</sup>, and the address to the community of monks, which among the sayings of Buddha, containing nothing that has not been well said, selects certain passages as pre-eminently suited for instruction and meditation<sup>2</sup>.

At this point we should doubtless interpolate a series of events which were of high importance for the spread of Buddhism, and which, though not mentioned by the emperor himself, are among all the legendary matter that has gathered round his name the portion best entitled to credence. It is in the nineteenth year from Açoka's coronation, the twenty-first according to a proposed chronological emendation, that the Mahāvamsa, the Pāli history of Buddhism in India and Ceylon, places the Third Council, held under the emperor's patronage in the Açokārāma at Pāṭaliputra. The Council, occasioned by sectarian differences among the Buddhist confession, of which as many as eighteen divisions are named, was held under the presidency of a famous monk, named Moggaliputta Tissa, to be distinguished from another Tissa mentioned in the same accounts as brother and viceroy of Açoka : in the northern texts he is called Upagupta. It deliberated during a period of nine months ; and its ultimate decision is stated to have been in favour of the school of the Sthaviras, which afterwards prevailed in Ceylon. This remarkable gathering, though ignored by the northern Buddhists, can hardly be a fiction : it represents the culmination of the earlier form of Buddhism, which with the ensuing expansion was destined to undergo a profound modification of spirit. The canon of authoritative scriptures is stated to have been on this occasion definitely closed ; and in the Kathāvatthu, composed at the time by Upagupta, we have a full record of the divergencies of opinion which led to its convention. Its dismissal was the signal for an organisation of the missionary activity which was already, as we have seen, included in the policy

<sup>1</sup> Edict of Sārnāth, Kauçāmbī, and Sānchī.

<sup>2</sup> Edict of Bhābrā.



of Aṣoka. The names of the chief evangelisers of the different provinces are carefully preserved to us. To Kashmīr and Gandhāra was sent Madhyantika, and to the Yavana or Greek country (Bactria?), Mahārakshita; southern India, in its several provinces, claimed the apostles Mahādeva (Mahishamaṇḍala), Rakshita (Vana-vāsa), Dharmarakshita a Yavana (Aparāntaka), and Mahādhar-marakshita (Mahārāshṭra); Majjhima proceeded to the Himālaya regions, and the fraternal pair Soṇa and Uttara, linked by the common vicissitudes of more than a single existence, to Suvarṇa-bhūmi, or a part of further India. That these are no mere legendary names we are permitted to know from some of the earliest surviving monuments of Buddhism, the *stūpas* of Sānchī, dating from the second, or first, century B.C., where relics of some of them have actually come to light<sup>1</sup>. But their fame has been eclipsed by that of the saints entrusted with the conversion of Ceylon, who are said to have been no other than Aṣoka's own children, his son the monk Mahendra and his daughter the nun Saṅghamitrā<sup>2</sup>. Accompanied by the *sthaviras* Rishṭriya, Utriya, Ćambala, and Bhadrasāra, they received a becoming welcome from the king of Ceylon, Devānāmpiya Tissa, who with his people was ultimately converted, and founded in honour of the evangelists the Great Vihāra, thenceforward the headquarters of Singhalese Buddhism. The special history of the island falls outside the scope of this chapter: the mission of the princely pair was treasured in the memory of Indian Buddhism; and its dispatch has been supposed to be depicted in a fresco on a wall in one of the caves of Ajanta<sup>3</sup>.

We now return to Aṣoka's own rescripts, the concluding group of seven edicts, which are found inscribed upon pillars, the whole number at Delhi and six of them also at other spots in the central regions of Hindustān. They belong to the twenty-seventh and following year from the coronation. In tenor they open out no new courses of action, but repeat and continue the earlier principles. One of them, however, which will be textually introduced below (pp. 510-1), has an especial interest, as a recapitulation of the aims and measures of the reign.

The whole duration of Aṣoka's rule was, according to the concurrent testimony of the Brāhman and Buddhist historians, 36-37 years, reckoned, no doubt, from his accession. He himself

<sup>1</sup> See Cunningham, *Bhilsa Topes*, pp. 285 sqq.; Maisey, *Sanchi*, pp. 108-115; Fleet, *J.R.A.S.*, 1910, pp. 425 f. For the *stūpas* of Sānchī see Chapter xxvi, pp. 627 ff.

<sup>2</sup> On these relationships *v. inf.* p. 500.

<sup>3</sup> Griffiths, *Pl.* 94, 95. For the history of Ceylon see Chapter xxv.

makes mention of his brothers and sisters<sup>1</sup>, a sufficient refutation of the legend that at his accession he began his reign by putting to death all the hundred other sons of Bindusāra. His elder brother, known in northern literature as Susīma, and in Pāli books as Sumana, doubtless did incur the fate of a vanquished rival: and it is to the son of Susīma, by name Nigrodha, that the king's conversion to Buddhism is ascribed<sup>2</sup>. A full brother, Tissa, plays a considerable part in the Pāli story. He is said to have been for a time viceroy, and to have joined the Buddhist order, along with Agni-Brahmā, husband of Saṅghamitrā, in the fourth year after Açoka's coronation. A Chief Queen and her sons, no doubt the princes referred to as viceroys in Taxila and Ujjain, are mentioned in the edicts<sup>3</sup>, as also are the second queen Kāruvākī and her son Tivara. The Chief Queen, in the Ceylon records named Asandhimitrā, may possibly have been the heroine of Açoka's youthful romance as Viceroy of Ujjain, the lovely maiden named Devī, of Vedisā (Vidiçā, the modern Bhilsa), mother of Mahendra and Saṅghamitrā<sup>4</sup>. Another romance is connected with the name of Tishyarakshitā, represented as an attendant upon Asandhimitrā and Chief Queen of Açoka's later years, who, enacting the part of Potiphar's wife, is stated to have occasioned the blinding of the emperor's eldest son and heir, Kuṇāla, Viceroy of Taxila, and in a still later legend founder of the Buddhist dynasty of Khotan in Chinese Turkestan. The jealousy of Tishyarakshitā is said to have been aroused also by Açoka's devotion to the sacred Banyan tree at Gayā, under which the son of Çuddhodana had attained to Perfect Enlightenment. And thus on the Sānchi *stūpa*, where we find carved the propitiatory procession to the tree, by which the threatened mischief was appeased<sup>5</sup>, we have an actual first or second century representation in art, though by no means a por-

<sup>1</sup> Rock Edict v.

<sup>2</sup> According to the story Nigrodha was at the time about seven years old! The date is, of course, irreconcilable with the edicts.

<sup>3</sup> Pillar Edict vii.

<sup>4</sup> Mahendra is said to have been twenty years of age, and Saṅghamitrā eighteen, at the time of their ordination. As the former was born fourteen years before the coronation, this brings us to the year 6 after that event, which is again hardly to be reconciled with the edicts. It was for Mahendra, who was ordained by Moggaliputta Tissa and who afterwards succeeded the latter as head of his followers, that Açoka built the Açokārāma at Pāṭaliputra. As is well known, Mahendra is in the northern stories made the brother, and not the son, of Açoka, probably through confusion with Tissa. A son of Saṅghamitrā, Sumana by name, also became a monk. Of a daughter of Açoka, by name Chārumatī, a Nepāl legend will be mentioned below (p. 501).

<sup>5</sup> Foucher, *The Beginnings of Buddhist Art*, pp. 108-9. See also Chapter xxvi, p. 630, Pl. XXII, 60.

trait, of the great propagator of the Buddhist faith and morals and the imperially lavish founder of its shrines.

Açoka's activity in this latter respect is not proportionally evidenced by existing monuments. When the Chinese pilgrims refer, as they constantly do, to a '*stūpa* of Açoka,' we cannot in strictness understand anything more than one of archaic style, such as are those still more or less intact at Sānchī or Bhārhut, or figured on their sculptures and elsewhere, nor are we allowed to ascribe *en bloc* to the emperor himself the pillars at Delhi, Allahābād, Sārnaṭh, Rāmpūrvā and in other places, on which his edicts are found inscribed: he himself forbids this, when he orders his edicts to be engraven on pillars, where such should be found<sup>1</sup>. The only works of this nature particularised by him in the edicts relating to the places in question are the double enlargement of the *stūpa* of Koṇagamana at Nigliṇa, the pillar erected at the same place and that at the Lumbinī garden: the cave-dwellings assigned to the Ājīvika monks in the Barābar hills are not expressly stated to have been constructed by Açoka's orders. When we have added the stone railing round the Bodhi-tree, which seems to be figured on the *stūpa* of Sānchī (*v. sup.* p. 500), we have completed the list of what can certainly be ascribed to him. But, no doubt, the remains of the palace, the Açokārāma, the Kukkuṭārāma, and other erections at Pāṭaliputra may be plausibly claimed for him<sup>2</sup>; and we may also mention the completion on his behalf, by the Yavana king Tushāspa, of the Sudarçana tank in Junāgarh, which had been begun by his grandfather Chandragupta<sup>3</sup>. For the rest we must be content to believe that the great reputation which he enjoyed in this respect had a solid foundation.

Two famous cities in frontier countries have a traditional claim to Açoka as founder. The former is Çrīnagar, the capital of Kashmīr, embracing the site of the old Çrīnagarī, which is connected with his name<sup>4</sup>. In Nepāl the ancient city of Deo-Pātan (Deva-pattana) and the adjacent village of Chabāhil are associated with a visit of Açoka accompanied by a daughter Chārumatī and her Kshatriya husband Devapāla<sup>5</sup>. The two latter are said to have remained in the country and to have built respectively a

<sup>1</sup> Edict of Sahasrām etc. (the earliest edict). Pillars set up by Açoka's own orders are mentioned in Pillar Edict vii (quoted in full *inf.* p. 510). In other cases style and archaeological considerations must decide.

<sup>2</sup> Waddell, *Report on the Excavations at Pāṭaliputra (Patna)*, Calcutta, 1903.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep. Ind.* viii, pp. 46-7.

<sup>4</sup> *Rājataranginī*, translation of Sir M. A. Stein, i, ll. 101-7, and the notes.

<sup>5</sup> Sylvain Lévi, *Le Nepal* (Musée Guimet, 1905-8), i, pp. 67 and 263; ii, 24, 336; iii, 161 f.



nunnery and a monastery, the latter left unfinished by its founder. The legend—for such it is—derives some support from the archaic style of the four neighbouring *stūpas* ascribed to Açoka.

The name Açoka occurs in only one of the known inscriptions<sup>1</sup>. Elsewhere the emperor employs (in conjunction with *rājā*, 'king') the official titles *devānām priya*, 'dear to the gods,' and *priyadarçana*, 'of friendly mien.' The former style—which in later ages the popular grumbling, so humorously common in India, as in other countries, diverted to the sense of 'fool'—is known to have been employed by contemporary kings in Ceylon, and by Açoka's grandson (or still more remote descendant) Daçaratha, so that it was probably normal; indeed Açoka himself once uses the plural in the sense practically of 'kings.' *Priyadarçin* also, which has been well rendered 'gracious,' may represent a customary view that the king should wear 'a mild, pleasant, and composed aspect'<sup>2</sup>. But it is certainly quite possible, as M. Senart suggests<sup>3</sup>, that it was adopted by Açoka as his ordination name.

The chronology of the reign is fixed within wide limits by the mention in the thirteenth Rock Edict of 'the Yona King Antiochus and beyond that Antiochus to where dwell the four kings severally named Ptolemy (Philadelphus of Egypt, 285–247 B.C.), Antigonus (Gonatas of Macedon, 278–239), Magas (of Cyrene, died 258), and Alexander (of Epirus, 272–258?).' The fact that these are all supposed to be reigning makes it unlikely that the edict was issued long after the year 258 B.C., when one, if not two, of them died. A prior limit of any value does not seem to be supplied by the passage, inasmuch as Antiochus Theos, whose reign began in 261 B.C., was preceded by a sovereign, his father, of like name. The omission of the Bactrian ruler Diodotus, whose independence of the Seleucid empire dates from about 250 B.C., confirms the inference that the edict is not long posterior to the year 258. Adopting 258–7 as its provisional date, and accepting the arguments which assign it to the fourteenth year, we arrive at 270 B.C. as the latest year for the coronation: but plainly nothing in the calculation forbids an earlier date. That the coronation was posterior by four years to the actual beginning of the reign is affirmed by the Ceylon tradition and perhaps also indirectly implied by the same: which would

<sup>1</sup> Found in 1915 at Maski in the Raichūr Dist. of Hyderābād; see *Hyderabad Arch. Series*, No. 1, 1915.

<sup>2</sup> *Mbh.* xii, 67, 39; cf. 57, 19. In the Kharoshthī documents from Chinese Turkestan *priyadarçana* is a common form of polite address; see *Kharoshthī Inscriptions*, Part I, 1920, *passim*.

<sup>3</sup> *Les Inscriptions de Piyadasi*, II, pp. 227–8.

give the year 274 B.C. as the latest possible for Aṣoka's accession. But this may reasonably be suspected as an invention made in the interest of a chronological system<sup>1</sup>. A provisional chronological scheme of the reign might then take shape as follows :

274 B.C. at latest : accession.

270 B.C. at latest : coronation.

262 B.C. at latest : conquest of Kaliṅga and adhesion to Buddhism.

260 B.C. at latest : entry into the order of monks and beginning of active propaganda.

259 B.C. at latest : issue of first Edict (that of Sahasrām, Rūpnāth, Bairāt and Brahmagiri).

258-7 B.C. at latest : issue of the fourteen Rock Edicts ; dedication of cave dwellings in the Barābar hills.

256 B.C. at latest : visit to Kapilavastu.

253 B.C. ? : Council of Pāṭaliputra.

250 B.C. at latest : second visit to Kapilavastu and visit to the Lumbini garden.

243-2 B.C. at latest : issue of Pillar Edicts.

237-6 B.C. ? : death of Aṣoka (on the assumption that the reign lasted 36 or 37 years, as the Purāṇas and Pāli books affirm).

According to the Ceylon tradition the coronation of Aṣoka took place 218 years (i.e. in the 219th year) after the death of Buddha, and the Council in the 236th year. The tradition of Khotan on the other hand, as reported in Tibetan books<sup>2</sup>, places the 50th year (out of 55) in the reign at an interval of 234 years from the *Parinirvāṇa*. The Chinese and Sanskrit reckonings are, as is well known, vitiated by confusion with another Aṣoka, Kālāṣoka or Kākavarṇa of the Çiçunāga dynasty, who is placed one century after Buddha. The number 218 may very well be deserving of credit as a genuine tradition<sup>3</sup> ; but it is of value for the determination rather of the date of Buddha than that of Aṣoka. A much discussed number 256 in the earliest edict has no bearing upon chronology<sup>4</sup>.

The activity of Aṣoka lay wholly, so far as we are informed of it, in the sphere of *dharma*, i.e. according to the Indian definition, the sphere of conduct leading to heaven or to final liberation<sup>5</sup> ; we may say, the spheres of religion and morality. It therefore furnishes a complement to the strictly political system of the

<sup>1</sup> A supposition broached and rejected by M. Senart, *op. cit.* II, pp. 237-8. But possibly Aṣoka may have been *de facto* ruler during the last years of Bindusāra, which may explain the extra three years assigned by the Buddhists to that king (*supra*, p. 495).

<sup>2</sup> Rockhill, *Life of the Buddha*, p. 233, and the Tibetan texts there named.

<sup>3</sup> Geiger's translation of the *Mahāvamsa*, Introduction, pp. xxxi sqq.

<sup>4</sup> F. W. Thomas, *Ind. Ant.*, 1908, pp. 19-23, and *Les Vivāsāh d'Aṣoka* (*Jour. As.*, Série X, xv, pp. 507-22).

<sup>5</sup> For the employment of the word by Aṣoka see Senart, *Les Inscriptions de Piṇḍasi*, II, pp. 308 f.

Arthaçāstra. We may consider it under the aspects of the emperor's principles and personal action, his admonitions, and his ordinances and institutions.

It was, as we have seen, the events of the Kalinga war that awoke the humanitarian and missionary spirit in Açoka. He was impressed both by the actual horrors of the campaign and by the interference with the peaceful and moral influence of the religious teachers. The chords which were struck have in Indian life a dominant note : Açoka attached himself to the Buddhist religion, the most important of those which upheld the doctrines of *ahimsā* and *maitrī*, abstinence from doing hurt to, and benevolent feeling towards, living creatures. Two and a half years later he awoke to the possibilities of his position, joined the order of monks, and entered upon a course of 'activity.'

The importance of energetic action by the sovereign was not a new conception ; the Indian writers on policy make it the subject of constant admonition to their rulers (*v. sup.* p. 492). Nor was the idea of royal responsibility for the virtue of the people a novelty : the king is, as we have seen (*ibid.*), the upholder of *dharma* and incurs a proportion of the sin of the people, if he exacts the taxes without maintaining the social order. But Açoka gives to these principles a new force and direction by calling upon all to participate in his energy and by fixing attention upon moral improvement as a means to happiness in the present, and further in another, life. His position is therefore not merely paternal, as the books would require, and as he himself professes<sup>1</sup>: he has also a moral and religious responsibility and mission.

The degree of Açoka's appreciation of Buddhism is not very easily definable ; and it was even at one time contended that his early faith, which laid such special stress upon the doctrine of benevolence, was rather that of Jainism. He emphasises the principle of tolerance, wishes for the real prosperity of all sects, and, while not discouraging discussion, always a prominent feature of Indian religious life, earnestly preaches avoidance of offence. If he discountenances what he considers vain ceremonials and certain popular entertainments, which were occasions of animal slaughter, his attitude to the Brāhman system in general is benevolent and respectful : he believes in the gods and would have his people strive for heaven. Nevertheless, Açoka was undoubtedly a Buddhist : he became a lay disciple and then a monk ; later he

<sup>1</sup> Kalinga Edicts I and II.



proclaims his regard for the religion and his personal faith<sup>1</sup>; he addresses the church, naming certain passages from the scriptures as specially suitable for teaching and study; he denounces penalties for schism; he holds a council which defines the canon; and finally he stands out as by far the greatest author of the religious foundations of the sect. On the other hand we hear from him nothing concerning the deeper ideas or fundamental tenets of the faith; there is no mention of the Four Grand Truths, the Eightfold Path, the Chain of Causation, the supernatural quality of Buddha: the word and the idea of *Nirvāṇa* fail to occur; and the innumerable points of difference which occupied the several sects are likewise ignored. Aśoka, therefore, is no theologian or philosopher; and only in the saying that the gift of *dharma* is above all other gifts, and in the preference of meditation to liberality, do we find any trace of such modes of thought.

Of Aśoka's personal action the most important features were his religious tours and progresses, which began at the end of the eleventh year. They were the occasion of personal intercourse with the people, including discussions and instructions in religious matters. In the course of these, and on other occasions, he was wont to issue religious proclamations, which were published by his officials and inscribed on rocks and pillars. He claims that in little more than a year he had brought the Brāhman gods to the knowledge of those people in India, i.e. the wild tribes, who had formerly known nothing of them<sup>2</sup>. Further he organised shows and processions exhibiting figures of the gods in their celestial cars, of sacred elephants, and fires<sup>3</sup>. The practice of earlier times, which made the king accessible to the public only at certain hours, he modified to the extent of being ready to transact business or see officials even in his most private seclusion<sup>4</sup>. He subjected his household to supervision by special religious dignities: and finally he restricted the diet of the palace practically to the point of vegetarianism<sup>5</sup>. His activity in causing trees to be planted by the roads, and wells for travellers to be constructed at every half-koss, also his provision of medical aid for men and animals, and his propagation of useful plants, need not be further dwelt upon: only in degree were they a new feature of royal beneficence in India<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Edict of Bhābrā (*prasāda* in Buddhist phraseology denotes 'faith').

<sup>2</sup> Edict of Sahasrām etc.

<sup>3</sup> Rock Edict iv.

<sup>4</sup> Rock Edict vi.

<sup>5</sup> Rock Edict i; Pillar Edict v.

<sup>6</sup> Bühler, *Z.D.M.G.*, xxxvii, pp. 101-2, and as regards trees, wells etc., cf. *Arthaśāstra*, 19.

Açoka's relations with the Buddhist *Saṅgha* were, no doubt, friendly and cordial. He had himself been ordained, as had his brother, and by the surrender of his son and daughter also he had acquired a right to the title 'Kinsman of the Faith.' But no doubt the monkish chronicles go too far in representing his devotion as without bounds. Even his lavish expenditure upon religious edifices is exaggerated in the statement that he thrice gave away, and purchased back, Jambu-dvīpa or the continent of India<sup>1</sup>! It can hardly be that an emperor so conscious of the responsibilities of his unique position should have been made more amenable to the authority of a religious order by himself joining it. Nor is there in his actual references to the *Saṅgha* any note of special deference; nor again do his ordinances accord to it any special regard, since the *parishads* whose affairs were to be supervised by the *dharma-mahāmātras* included the managing committees of all sects. On the other hand, we fail to detect even in the advice which Açoka gives to the *Saṅgha* concerning specially applicable passages from the scriptures any note of the arrogance which might have betrayed an emperor himself at home in the order. In fact such an attitude would be both un-Indian (as sanctity and learning in India excite a *genuine* respect) and anachronistic in what was still an age of faith. On the whole, easy as it would be to imagine flaws, one way or the other, in Açoka's relations with the clergy, it would be hard to demonstrate them to a sound intelligence: by his grasp of the essential he rises superior to such personal suspicions.

Of the Buddhist leaders with whom he is said to have been in correspondence the most important is Upagupta or Moggaliputta Tissa. This divine is reckoned as fifth in the succession of Vinaya teachers from the time of Buddha, the series being Upāli, Dāsaka, Sonaka, Siggava and Chaṇḍavajji, Moggaliputta Tissa<sup>2</sup>. Tissa was 60 years old at the time of Açoka's coronation, and he died 26 years later, being succeeded by Mahendra. Apart from the Kathāvatthu he is not known as an author, his great monument being the Third Council. A famous *stūpa* was built in his honour at Mathurā.

Mention has already been made of the missionary leaders,

<sup>1</sup> Hiuen Tsiang states that the fact was recorded in an inscription on the pillar at Pāṭaliputra (trans. Beal, II, p. 91).

<sup>2</sup> The identity of this Tissa with Upagupta was proved by Col. L. Waddell in the *Journal* (1897, pp. 76-84) and *Proceedings* (1899, pp. 70-5) of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. Concerning the succession see Geiger's translation of the *Mahāvamsa*, Introduction, pp. xlvii f.

whose activity is said to have followed upon the Third Council, and of Aṣoka's several relatives who joined the order (*v. sup.* p. 499). The Pāli books mention also a Mahāvaruṇa, and the two sons of Kuntī, Tissa and Sumitta, who are said to have died after Aṣoka's eighth year : they are not otherwise known.

The northern books<sup>1</sup> mention a minister Rādhāgupta, who is said to have played an important part in Aṣoka's attainment of sovereignty and his administration ; and another minister, the Arhat Yaças, associated with the Khotan legend of Kustana. The existence of the minister Yaças seems deserving of credence as he is mentioned in the Sūtrālaṃkāra of Aṣvaghosha<sup>2</sup>.

The moral exhortations which Aṣoka most frequently addresses to his people refer to the practice of simple virtues, namely proper treatment of slaves and servants, obedience to father and mother, generosity and respect to friends, companions, relations, ascetics, and Brāhmins, abstinence from cruelty to living creatures. For this imperial insistence upon such obvious duties we are right to demand some explanation ; and we may perhaps find an explanation in his statement that there had been during a long period a deterioration in these respects<sup>3</sup>. Not to attribute to Aṣoka the character merely of a retrospective pessimism, we may think of the social and other changes which might naturally accompany the growth of a great empire, the succession of dynastic tragedies, the subjugation of small states, the Greek invasion, and the initiation of numerous sects. And, apart from the general responsibility of a paternal rule, he might have found even in the Arthaśāstra (19, p. 47) the principle that the royal authority should ensure the observance of proper discipline in the household, an obligation which even the modern state does not decline. As regards the aged and the poor, who are placed under the care of religious officials<sup>4</sup>, we have seen that—in the absence of a 'poor law'—the care of such was a traditional obligation of royalty (*v. sup.* p. 487). These primary admonitions recur also in the latest of the edicts, as they had been prominent, along with the appeal for energy and mutual exhortation, in the earliest. But we hear also from the beginning of piety—friendship in piety, liberality in piety, kinship in piety—concord and the growth of sects in essential matters, in a word of religion, *dharma*, as something more than *çīla*, 'morality.' It was to be expected that with

<sup>1</sup> *Aṣokāvadāna* (= *Divyāvadāna*, xxix) and *Kuṇḍālavadāna* (= *ibid.* xxvii).

<sup>2</sup> Translated from the Chinese by E. Huber (Paris, 1908) ; see the Index.

<sup>3</sup> Rock Edict iv.

<sup>4</sup> Rock Edict v.



advancing years the religious feeling should acquire a stronger hold; whence we are not surprised to find in the later edicts a special exhortation to self-examination and the view that the chief thing is personal adherence to a man's adopted faith. In a country where during later ages the ecstatic, metaphysical, and fanciful aspects of religion have predominated, the sober Buddhist piety revealed in the edicts (and not uncommonly evidenced in the literature of Buddhism, both of the Great and Little Vehicles) deserves remark.

The measures, enactments, and institutions of Açoka need not more than moderately detain us. His philanthropic activity in providing wells and trees along the roads, in propagating medicinal plants, and in founding hospitals for men and animals—an activity not confined to his own dominions—and further his great rôle as propagator of his religion and pious founder, also his regulations concerning the slaughter and treatment of animals, have already received due notice. To the same sphere belong his rules concerning prisoners, the reservation of capital punishment, and the respite of the condemned during three days with a view to their spiritual welfare and edifying works.

The official system remained for the most part unchanged<sup>1</sup>. The presence of Açoka's envoys even as far as the various Greek kingdoms is plainly contemplated. The general term denoting the superior officials is *mahāmātra*, while the lower, especially the clerkly ranks, are entitled *yukta*. The highest local officers 'set over many hundreds of thousands of people'—corresponding no doubt to the *sthānikas* of the Arthaśāstra—are mentioned as *rājūkas*<sup>2</sup>, and with them are associated *prādeçikas*, perhaps the *pradesht̐ris* whose functions we have already defined. It is to these officers that a number of the edicts are addressed. They are exhorted to adopt towards the people under their charge the mild, patient, and benevolent principles of the emperor himself: they are compared to nurses entrusted with the charge of children. An institution several times referred to is the *anusamyāna*, or periodical tour, still a feature of Indian administration. This was not an innovation on the part of Açoka, but a part of the system which he inherited<sup>3</sup>. However, he added to the duties of the

<sup>1</sup> For a full discussion see Senart, *Les Inscriptions de Piyaḍasi*, II, pp. 278 f.

<sup>2</sup> Or *rajjuḡrāhakas*, as in the Pāli books='land-measurers,' the ἀγρονόμοι of Megasthenes, concerning whom *v. sup.* p. 417. Cf. Bühler, *Z.D.M.G.*, XLVII, pp. 466-71.

<sup>3</sup> This is implied by Açoka himself (Rock Edict III): cf. Bühler, *Z.D.M.G.*, XLI, p. 19.

touring officials, as early as his thirteenth year, that of following his own example in making their visitations the occasion of benevolent activity and religious propaganda. For this purpose, however, he himself organised a special ecclesiastical hierarchy of religious officers (*dharma-mahāmātra*), to whom these two functions were primarily assigned, and who moreover superintended the bounties of his own household, and those of his queens, his sons, and other relatives, and organised the activities of the committees and councils (*parishad*) at the head of the Buddhist, Jain, Ājīvika and other sects. The tolerance of all sects as regards liberty of residence in every district seems also to be a feature of Aśoka's own conception, as it is opposed to the rule of the Arthaśāstra (19, p. 48).

Here we conclude our analytical appreciation of Aśoka's rule. But the personality which in so un-Indian a fashion pervades the whole of his proclamations—a personality which in its rather high-strung, and by consequence partly plaintive, energy recalls another flawless imperial saint, the Roman Marcus Aurelius—can be communicated only in his own words: and we are therefore justified in citing two of his edicts, one a normal specimen of their tone, and the second the solemn review of his measures, which, published in the twenty-seventh year from his consecration, we have ventured to designate as ‘the testament of Aśoka.’

#### ROCK EDICT IV.

In the past, during many centuries, there has been steady growth in the practice of taking life, ill-usage of living creatures, misbehaviour among relatives, misbehaviour towards Brāhmins and ascetics. But now through the pious observance of king Piyadasi, dear to the gods, the signal of the drum has become a signal of piety, displaying to the people sights of celestial cars, sights of elephants, bonfires, and other heavenly shapes. In such wise as has not been before in many centuries, there has been at present, owing to the inculcation of piety by king Piyadasi, dear to the gods, growth in abstinence from taking life, in abstinence from ill-usage of living creatures, in proper behaviour towards relatives, proper behaviour towards Brāhmins and ascetics, obedience to mother and father, obedience to elders. In these and other manifold ways pious observance has grown, and this pious observance king Piyadasi, dear to the gods, will make still to grow. The sons, also, and grandsons, and great-grandsons of king Piyadasi, dear to the gods, will foster this pious observance until the end of time. Standing fast by piety and morality, they will inculcate piety. For this is the best action, inculcation of piety: pious observance, again, is not found in an immoral person. Hence in this respect also growth and no falling off is good. To this end has this been inscribed, that men may effect growth in this respect and that falling off may not be suffered. This has been inscribed by king Piyadasi, dear to the gods, having been consecrated twelve years.

## PILLAR EDICT VII.

Thus says king Piyadasi, dear to the gods :

The kings who were in the past wished thus : 'How may the people grow with the growth of piety?' The people, however, did not grow with a proper growth in piety.

In this matter thus says king Piyadasi, dear to the gods :

This thought came to me : In the past the kings had this wish : 'How may the people grow with a proper growth in piety?' The people, however, did not grow with a proper growth in piety. Whereby then can the people be made to conform? Whereby can the people be made to grow with a proper growth in piety? Whereby can I elevate any of them by a growth in piety?

In this matter thus says king Piyadasi, dear to the gods :

This thought came to me, 'I will publish precepts of piety, I will inculcate instructions in piety : hearing these, the people will conform, will be elevated, and will grow strongly with the growth of piety.' For this purpose precepts of piety were published, manifold instructions in piety were enjoined, so that my officers in charge of large populations might expound them and spread them abroad. The governors also, in charge of many hundred thousand lives, they also were ordered, 'thus and thus catechise the persons of the establishment of piety.'

Thus says Piyadasi, dear to the gods :

With the same object pillars of piety were made by me, dignitaries of piety were instituted, precepts of piety were proclaimed.

Thus says king Piyadasi, dear to the gods :

On the roads also banyans were planted, to give shade to cattle and men : mango-gardens were planted : and at each half-koss wells were dug : also rest-houses were made : many watering-stations also were made in this and that place for the comfort of cattle and men. Little indeed is mere comfort : for with various gratifications the people have been gratified both by previous kings and by myself. But, that they might conform with a conformity in piety, for this reason was this done by me.

Thus says Piyadasi, dear to the gods :

Dignitaries of piety were appointed by me in charge of manifold indulgences, these both for ascetics and for householders ; also over all sects were they appointed. Over the affairs of the Saṅgha also were they set, 'these shall be appointed' ; likewise over Brāhmanas, Ājivikas also were they set, 'these shall be appointed.' Over Nirgranthas also were they set, 'these shall be appointed.' Over various sects also were they set, 'these shall be appointed.' According to circumstances such and such dignitaries were set over such and such. Dignitaries of piety also were appointed over both these and all other sects.

Thus says king Piyadasi, dear to the gods :

These and various other classes were appointed in charge of the distribution of charity, both my own and that of the queens. And in my whole harem they carry out in manifold fashions such and such measures of satisfaction, both here and in all quarters. The same has been done as regards the distribution of charity on the part of my sons and the other princes, 'these shall be appointed over the distributions of charity,' with a view to ensamples of piety and for conformity to piety. For this is an ensample of piety and conformity to piety, when in the people compassion, liberality, truth, honesty, mildness, and goodness shall thereby be increased.

Thus says king Piyadasi, dear to the gods :

Whatsoever good deeds have been done by me, thereto the people have conformed, and those they copy. And thereby they have grown and will grow



in obedience to mothers and fathers, in obedience to venerable persons, in conformity to the old, in right behaviour towards Brāhman and ascetics, the poor and wretched, slaves and servants.

Thus says king Piyadasi, dear to the gods :

This growth in piety is a growth in two respects, in the restraints of piety and in considerateness. Now of these restraint by piety is a little thing, but considerateness a greater. The restraint of piety is this, that I have had such and such creatures made exempt from slaughter, and there are other restraints of piety which have been ordained by me. But by considerateness there has been to a greater degree a growth in piety on the part of men, conducing to abstention from ill-usage to living creatures and to non-taking of life. This was done to this end, that sons and grandsons may continue therein as long as moon and sun endure, and that they may conform accordingly. For by so conforming this life and the future life are secured. This Edict of Piety was inscribed by me, when I had been six and twenty years consecrated.

Thus says the dear to the gods :

Where there are stone pillars or stone slabs, there this Edict of Piety is to be inscribed, that it may be permanent.

The dynastic successors of Açoka are by the Brāhman and Buddhist traditions diversely reported according to the following scheme :

<i>Brāhman Sources.</i>	<i>Buddhist Sources.</i>
A <sup>1</sup> .	A.
(Pargiter, <i>Dynasties of the Kālī Age</i> , pp. 27-30.)	(Divyāvadāna, xxix.)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Kuṇāla or Suyāṣas, reigned 8 years.</li> <li>*2. Bandhupālita, son of Kuṇāla, reigned 8 years.</li> <li>*3. Indrapālita.</li> <li>*4. Daṣona, son of 3, reigned 7 years.</li> <li>5. Daçaratha, son of 4, reigned 8 years.</li> <li>6. Samprati or Saṅgata, son of 5, reigned 9 years.</li> <li>*7. Çāliçūka, son of 6, reigned 13 years.</li> <li>8. Devadharman or Devavarman or Somarman, son of 7, reigned 7 years.</li> <li>9. Çatadhanvan or Çaçadharman, son of 8, reigned 8 years.</li> <li>10. Bṛihadhratha, reigned 7 years.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Kuṇāla.</li> <li>2. Samprati, son of 1.</li> <li>3. Bṛihaspati, son of 2.</li> <li>4. Vṛishasena, son of 3.</li> <li>5. Pushyadharma, son of 4.</li> <li>6. Pushyamitra, son of 5.</li> </ol>
B.	B.
(Rājatarāṅgiṇī, i, 108 f.)	(Tāranātha, <i>History of Buddhism</i> , trans. Schiefner, pp. 48 f.)
Jaloka in Kashmīr, son of Açoka.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Kuṇāla.</li> <li>2. Vigatāçoka.</li> <li>3. Virasena.</li> </ol>

<sup>1</sup> The names accompanied by an asterisk appear only in certain recensions of the Purānic list.

These meagre and conflicting lists are evidently no material for history : but they supply certain indications which may hereafter be verified. One of the Buddhist sources includes in the dynasty the name of Pushyamitra, really the founder of the succeeding line of the Çuṅgas : he was commander-in-chief to Bṛihadhratha and he availed himself of a grand review of the army to overthrow and slay his master<sup>1</sup>. Lest this error of the Buddhists should lead us wholly to prefer the Brāhman accounts, let us observe that the latter differ in numerous particulars, some naming more kings than others, and all presenting diversities of spelling : moreover, none of them justifies in detail the total of 137 years which they unanimously ascribe to the whole Maurya dynasty.

The existence of some of the kings named in the list is avouched by independent evidence. Daçaratha is known by three inscriptions bestowing on the Ājīvika sect caves in the Nāgārjunī hills<sup>2</sup> : Samprati is mentioned in the Jain tradition as a convert of their patriarch Suhastin<sup>3</sup>. Jaloka is celebrated in the history of Kashmīr, as a great propagator of Çaivism and for a time a persecutor of the Buddhists, further as having freed the country from an invasion of Mlecchas, who would be Greeks, and a conqueror who extended his dominions as far as Kanyākubja or Kanauj.

The extreme confusion reigning in the legends is probably, as was indicated long ago, to be explained by a division of the empire, perhaps beginning after Samprati<sup>4</sup>. The Buddhists will then give the western line, as is indicated by the fact that Vīrasena is represented as ruling in Gandhāra<sup>5</sup> and further by the fact that Sophagasenus, or Subhāgasena, with whom Antiochus the Great renewed an ancestral friendship in 206 B.C.<sup>6</sup>, is indicated by his name as a member of this line. This series will then have been terminated by the Greek conquest of the Punjab under Euthydemus and his successors. At Pāṭaliputra the second line may have held out a little longer, until about the year 184 B.C., when it was overthrown by Pushyamitra, whose power may have centred about Ujjain, and who, as is indicated in the drama of Kālidāsa called the *Mālavikāgnimitra*, succeeded to the struggle with the Greeks. But descendants of Açoka were as late as the

<sup>1</sup> Bāṇa's *Harshacharita* (trans. Cowell and Thomas), p. 193.

<sup>2</sup> *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, I, pp. 103-4, 134-5.

<sup>3</sup> See Jacobi's note in *S.B.E.*, xxii, p. 290 (*Kalpasūtra*).

<sup>4</sup> Lassen, *Ind. Alt.* II, pp. 283 ff.

<sup>5</sup> Tāranātha, *op. cit.* p. 50.

<sup>6</sup> Polybius, xi, 34 ; *v. sup.* Chapter xvii, p. 442.

seventh century A.D., if we may trust the statement of Hiuen Tsiang, still in possession of small dominions in eastern India: for he relates that shortly before his visit Pūrṇavarman, king of Magadha, a descendant of Aśoka, had restored the Bodhi-tree, which had been destroyed by Çaçāṅka, otherwise named Narendragupta, of Kārṇasuvarṇa, or Bengal<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> See the translations of Julien (I, pp. 463-4), Beal (II, p. 118), and Watters (II, p. 115).



## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- A. Aṅguttara Nikāya.  
 Abh. Abhandlungen.  
 Āçv. Āçvalāyana.  
 Air. Wb. Altiranisches Wörterbuch.  
 Alt. Leb. Altindisches Leben.  
 Āp. or Āpast. Āpastamba.  
 A.S.R. Reports of the Archaeological Survey of India. (Cunningham.)  
 Arch. Sur. Ind. Archaeological Survey of India. (Annual Reports.)  
 Arch. Sur. West. Ind. Archaeological Survey of Western India.  
 Av. Avesta.  
 Bab. Babylonian version.  
 Baudh. Baudhāyana.  
 Bh. Bahistān inscription.  
 B.M. Cat. British Museum Catalogue of Coins.  
 Brih. Brihaspati.  
 Brihannār. Brihannārāyaṇa.  
 Buddh. Ind. Buddhist India.  
 Çata. Br. Çatapatha Brāhmaṇa.  
 Cull. V. Cullavagga.  
 D. Dīgha Nikāya.  
 Dar. Pers. Inscription of Darius at Persepolis.  
 Dar. Sus. Inscription of Darius at Susa.  
 Dh. Ç. Dharma Çāstra.  
 Dh. S. Dharma Sūtra.  
 Dhp. Dhammapada.  
 Dhp. A. or Dhp. Comm. Commentary on the Dhammapada.  
 Die ar. Per. Die arische Periode.  
 Dip. Dipavaṃsa.  
 Divy. Divyāvadāna.  
 El. Elamite version.  
 Ep. Ind. Epigraphia Indica.  
 E.R.E. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics.  
 F.H.G. Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum.  
 Gaut. Gautama.  
 G.G.N. Nachrichten v. d. k. Gesells. d. Wissenschaften zu Göttingen.  
 G.S. Grihya Sūtra.  
 Grund. d. indo-ar. Phil. Grundriss der indo-arischen Philologie und Altertumskunde.  
 Grund. d. ir. Phil. Grundriss der iranischen Philologie.  
 Hir. Hiranyakeçin.  
 Hist. Num. Historia Numorum.  
 Imp. Gaz. Imperial Gazetteer of India.  
 Ind. Alt. Indische Alterthumskunde.  
 Ind. Ant. Indian Antiquary.  
 Ind. Stud. Indische Studien.  
 J.A. or Jour. As. Journal Asiatique.  
 J.A.O.S. Journal of the American Oriental Society.  
 J.A.S.B. Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.  
 J. Bomb. Br. R.A.S. Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.  
 Jāt. Jātaka.  
 J.H.S. Journal of Hellenic Studies.  
 J.P.T.S. Journal of the Pali Text Society.  
 J.R.A.S. Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.  
 Kali Age. The Purāṇa Text of the Dynasties of the Kali Age.  
 Le Z.A. Le Zend Avesta.  
 M. Majjhima Nikāya.  
 Mārķ. Pur. Mārķaṇḍeya Purāṇa.  
 Mbh. Mahābhārata.  
 Mhv. Mahāvamsa.  
 Mil. Milindapañha.  
 Msr. Mahāsammatā-rājāvaliya.  
 M.V. or Mah. Mahāvagga.  
 N.C. or Num. Chron. Numismatic Chronicle.  
 N.H. Naturalis Historia.  
 NR. Inscription at Naksh-i-Rustam.  
 Num. Zeit. Numismatische Zeitschrift.  
 obv. obverse.  
 O.P. Old Persian.  
 Pāc. Pācittiya.  
 Pār. Pāraskara.  
 Peta-v. A. Commentary on the Peta-vatthu.  
 Proc. Proceedings: A.S.B. Asiatic Society of Bengal; R.I.A. Royal Irish Academy.  
 Pss. Psalms.  
 P.T.S. Pali Text Society.  
 Pur. Purāṇa.  
 R. Rājāvaliya.

- Rām. Rāmāyana.  
 rev. reverse.  
 Rev. Num. Revue Numismatique.  
 Rh. D. Rhys Davids.  
 Rv. Rīgveda.  
 Rvp. Rājavikrama-pravṛittiya.  
 S. Saṃyutta Nikāya.  
 S.B.E. Sacred Books of the East.  
 Sitz. K.P.A. Sitzungsberichte d. k. preuss.  
     Akad. d. Wissens.  
 Sitz. Wien. Sitzungsberichte d. k. Akad.  
     d. Wissens zu Wien.  
 Smp. Samanta-pāsādikā.  
 S.N. Sutta Nipāta.  
 Sum. or Sum. Vil. Sumaṅgala-vilāsini.  
 Thag. or Therag. Theragāthā.  
 Thag. A. Commentary on the Theragā-  
     thā.  
 Thīg. or Therīg. Therīgāthā.  
 Thīg. A. Commentary on the Therīgāthā.  
 Trans. Transactions: Inter. Or. Cong.  
     International Congress of Orientalists;  
 R.I.A. Royal Irish Academy.  
 Ud. Udāna.  
 Vas. Vasishṭha.  
 Vd. Vendidad.  
 Vin. Vinaya.  
 V.O.J. (= W.Z.K.M.) Vienna Oriental  
     Journal.  
 Vr. Vijaya-rājāvaliya.  
 Vrv. Vijayarāja-vamsaya.  
 W.Z.K.M. (= V.O.J.) Wiener Zeitschrift  
     für die Kunde des Morgenlandes.  
 Yt. Yasht.  
 Ys. Yasna.  
 Z.D.M.G. Zeitschrift der Deutschen Mor-  
     genländischen Gesellschaft.  
 Z.f.N. Zeitschrift für Numismatik.

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## CHAPTERS XVIII AND XIX

### CHANDRAGUPTA, THE FOUNDER OF THE MAURYA EMPIRE; POLITICAL AND SOCIAL ORGANISATION OF THE MAURYA EMPIRE

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## CHAPTER XX

### AÇOKA, THE IMPERIAL PATRON OF BUDDHISM

#### 1. THE INSCRIPTIONS OF AÇOKA.

For bibliographies of the very large literature dealing with the inscriptions see R. O. Franke, *Pāli und Sanskrit* (pp. 1-5); V. A. Smith, *Asoka*<sup>2</sup> (pp. 202-4); id. *Early Hist. of Ind.*<sup>3</sup> (pp. 172-4); <id. *Asoka*<sup>3</sup> (pp. 227-30). The last appeared after the completion of this chapter.>

The present bibliography includes those works which deal directly with topics discussed in the chapter.

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## CHRONOLOGY

The following dates are accepted in this volume. Many of them can only be regarded as approximate, while others are conjectural.

- B.C.
- 2500      Probable date of the beginning of Āryan invasions (p. 70).
- 1400      Boghaz-köi inscriptions of kings of the Mitāni (pp. 72-3, 110-1).
- 1200—1000      Chhandas period of Indian literature: the earliest hymns of the Rigveda (p. 112).
- 1000—800      Mantra period, sometimes called the earlier Brāhmaṇa period: later hymns of the Rigveda and the Vedic collections—Rigveda, Yajurveda, Sāmaveda, Atharvaveda (p. 112).
- The tradition of the Purāṇas places the war between the Kurus and the Pāṇḍus in the earlier Brāhmaṇa period, c. 1000 B.C. (p. 307). The Mahābhārata which celebrates this war belongs in its present form to a much later date (pp. 252 ff.).
- 800—600      (Later) Brāhmaṇa period: the extant Brāhmaṇas (p. 112).
- The earliest Upanishads are probably not later than 550 or 600 B.C. (pp. 112, 147).
- It is possible that the story of the Rāmāyaṇa may have its origin in the later Brāhmaṇa period (p. 317).
- 600—200      Sūtra period (pp. 112, 227).
- 563—483      Siddhārtha Gautama, the Buddha (pp. 171-2, 312).
- According to Charpentier, 478 (477) B.C. appears to be a more probable date for the *nirvāṇa* of the Buddha (p. 156, n. 1).
- Among the contemporaries of the Buddha were Prasenajit (Pasenadi), king of Kosala (pp. 180, 309), Bimbisāra (Çreṇika) and Ajātaśatru (Ajātasattu, Kūṇika), kings of Magadha (pp. 183-4, 311), Pradyota (Pājota), king of Avanti (pp. 185, 310-1), and Udayana (Udena), king of Vatsa (Vamśa) (pp. 187, 308, 310).
- 558—530      Cyrus, king of Persia.
- Conquered Bactria and certain countries in the Kābul valley and N.W. India including Kāpiça and Gandhāra (pp. 329-33).
- 543—491      Bimbisāra (Çreṇika), king of Magadha (pp. 157, 183, 311-2).
- Conquered Āṅga c. 500 B.C. (pp. 311, 315).
- 540—468      Vardhamāna Nātaputra, Mahāvīra (pp. 156, 163).
- Traditional date 600-528 B.C. (p. 155).
- Pārçva, the predecessor of Mahāvīra as *tīrthakara*, is said to have died 250 years before him (p. 153).
- For the contemporaries of Mahāvīra and Buddha *v. sup.*
- 522—486      Darius I, king of Persia.
- The Greek geographer Hecataeus lived in his reign (pp. 336, n. 2, 394). Naval expedition of Scylax c. 517 B.C.; conquest of 'India' = the country of the Indus c. 518 B.C. (pp. 335-6).
- 491—459      Ajātaśatru (Kūṇika), king of Magadha (pp. 157, 311-2).
- Probably added Kāçī, Kosala, and Videha to the dominions of Magadha (p. 315).
- 486—465      Xerxes, king of Persia.
- The continuance of Persian domination in Northern India during his reign proved by statements of Herodotus (p. 340).

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483 B.C.—38 A.D. Kings of Ceylon.

Vijaya, the conqueror of the island, 483–445 B.C. (p. 606); Paṇḍu Vāsudeva 444–414 B.C.; Abhaya 414–394 B.C.; Paṇḍukābhaya 377–307 B.C. (p. 607); Muṭasiva 307–247 B.C.; Devānampīya Tissa 247–207 B.C.; Uttiya 207–197 B.C.; Mahāsiva 197–187 B.C.; Sūra Tissa 187–177 B.C.; Sena and Guttaka 177–155 B.C.; Asela 155–145 B.C.; Ēlāra 145–101 B.C. (p. 608); Duṭṭha-Gāmaṇī 101–77 B.C.; Saddhā-Tissa 77–59 B.C. (p. 609); Thūlathana 59 B.C.; Laṇḍa Tissa 59–50 B.C.; Khallātana 50–44 B.C.; Vaṭṭa-Gāmaṇī Abhaya 44, 29–17 B.C.; Mahāchūli Mahātissa 17–3 B.C.; Choranāga 3 B.C.—9 A.D.; Kuḍā Tissa 9–12 A.D. (p. 610); Kuṭakappa Tissa 16–38 A.D. (p. 611).

415–397 Ctesias, the Greek physician, at the court of Artaxerxes Mnēmōn, king of Persia (p. 397).

336–323 Alexander the Great, king of Macedon.

Conquest of Persia 330 B.C.: a statement of Arrian shows that Persian dominion in India continued until the end of the Achaemenian dynasty (p. 341).

Invasion of India at the end of 327 or the beginning of 326 B.C. (p. 354).

Retreat from the Beās, July 326 B.C. (p. 373).

Leaves India 325 B.C. (p. 380).

Death 323 B.C. (p. 386).

321–184 The Maurya Dynasty (pp. 471, 512).

Chandragupta 321–297 B.C. (pp. 471–2).

The Jain authorities give the year of his accession as 313 (312) B.C., a date at which the canon of the Jain scriptures was fixed (p. 482).

Megasthenes at the court of Chandragupta c. 300 B.C. (pp. 433, 472).

Bindusāra or Amitrochates, successor of Chandragupta: his reign variously stated as of 25, 27, or 28 years (pp. 433, 495).

Açoka 274–237 B.C. Accession 274 B.C. at latest; coronation 270 B.C. at latest; conquest of Kālīṅga 262 B.C. at latest; Buddhist council at Pāṭaliputra 253 B.C.?; death 237 or 236 B.C.? (p. 503).

Contemporary Hellenic kings—Antiochus II Theos of Syria 261–246 B.C.; Ptolemy Philadelphus of Egypt 285–247 B.C.; Antigonos Gonatas of Macedon 278–239 B.C.; Magas of Cyrene d. 258 B.C.; Alexander of Epirus 272–258 B.C.? (p. 502).

Contemporary king of Ceylon—Devānampīya Tissa 247–207 B.C. (p. 608).

Successors of Açoka (pp. 511–3).

312–280 Seleucus Nicator, king of Syria (p. 429).

Indian expedition c. 305 B.C. (p. 430).

Treaty of peace with Chandragupta (pp. 431, 472).

250 Approximate date of the establishment of the kingdom of Bactria by Diodotus (p. 435) and of the kingdom of Parthia by Arsaces (p. 439).

246 Conversion of Ceylon by the Buddhist apostle Mahendra (Mahinda), the son (or brother, p. 500, n. 4) of Açoka, in the year of the coronation of king Devānampīya Tissa (p. 608).

220 Approximate date of the establishment of the Andhra power (Çāta-vāhana dynasty, pp. 317–8, 529, 530, n. 1, 599) and of the kingdom of Kālīṅga (Cheta dynasty, pp. 534–5).

Early Andhra kings—Simuka (pp. 318, 529, 599); Kṛishṇa (pp. 529,



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535, 600) ; Çātakarṇi, contemporary with Pushyamitra, probably conquered Avanti from the Çuṅgas (pp. 530-2), also contemporary with Khāravela, *v. inf.*

King of Kalinga—Khāravela (acc. c. 169 B.C. if the Hāthigumphā inscr. is dated in the Maurya era) (pp. 314-5, 534 f., 602); invaded the dominions of Çātakarṇi (pp. 535-6, 600); defeated kings of Rājagriha and Magadha (pp. 536-7, 600).

206 Indian expedition of Antiochus III the Great, king of Syria, during the reign of Euthydemus, king of Bactria (pp. 441-2).

200—58 Yavana princes of the house of Euthydemus.

Their Indian conquests began in the reign of Euthydemus early in the 2nd century B.C., and were carried out by Demetrius, son of Euthydemus, and other princes of his family (Apollodotus I and Menander) (pp. 444 ff., 541, 543).

Their conquests in the upper Kābul valley and in N.W. India were wrested from them by Yavana princes of the house of Eucratides from c. 162 B.C. onwards (p. 554). Restruck coins show the transference of certain kingdoms in these regions from one house to the other (pp. 547, 551-2).

Subsequently the rule of the successors of Euthydemus—the families of Apollodotus I and Menander—was confined to kingdoms which lay to the east of the Jhelum (p. 548). These appear to have been conquered finally and incorporated into the Çaka empire during the reign of Azes I (acc. 58 B.C.) (pp. 554, 572).

To the house of Euthydemus belonged Demetrius (supposed limits of reign c. 190-160 B.C., pp. 444, 447), Apollodotus I, and Menander—all contemporary with Eucratides (pp. 548, 551).

Apollodotus I was deprived of the kingdom of Kāpiça by Eucratides, and was succeeded in the lower Kābul valley by Heliocles (pp. 547-8). The later princes of his family—Apollodotus II, Dionysius, Zoilus, and Apolophanes—ruled over kingdoms in the eastern Punjab (pp. 552-3).

Menander ruled over many kingdoms (p. 551). He was probably the leader of the Yavana incursion into the Midland Country (pp. 544, 551). Menander and Eucratides may perhaps have ruled at different times over Nicaea in the former realm of Alexander's Paurava king between the Jhelum and the Chenāb (pp. 551, 588). In Buddhist literature Menander (Milinda) is known as king of Çākala (Siālkot) in the former realm of Alexander's second Paurava king between the Chenāb and the Rāvi (pp. 549-50). The family of Menander seems to be represented by Agathocleia who may have been his queen, his son Strato I, and his great-grandson Strato II. Numismatic evidence apparently shows that this family was dispossessed finally of the kingdom of Nicaea by Heliocles in the reign of Strato I. Its rule in the eastern Punjab continued until the Çaka conquest in the reign of Azes I (pp. 553-4).

Hippostratus probably belonged to the house of Euthydemus, but his family is uncertain. He was contemporary with Azes I (pp. 554, 572).

184—72 The Çuṅga Dynasty.

The dates depend on the statements of the Purāṇas (p. 518).

B.C.

- Pushyamitra (184–148 B.C.), originally king of Vidiçā and commander-in-chief of the last Maurya emperor, seized the Maurya dominions and reigned at Pāṭaliputra (pp. 517–8).
- Deprived of the kingdom of Çākala by the Yavanas (probably by Menander) (p. 519).
- War between Vidiçā, now governed by his son Agnimitra as viceroy, and Vidarbha (assumed date c. 170 B.C.) (pp. 519, 600).
- Defeat of the Yavanas on the banks of the Sindhu by his grandson Vasumitra (p. 520).
- Invasion of his capital, Pāṭaliputra, by the Yavanas (probably under Menander) (pp. 544, 551).
- Deprived of the kingdom of Avanti (Ujjayinī) by the Andhra king Çātakaṛṇi (pp. 531–2).
- Later Çuṅga kings:—Agnimitra (p. 520); Vasumitra or Sumitra (p. 521); Odraka, probably contemporary with Bahasatimitra, king of Kauçāmbī (pp. 521, 525); Bhāga or Bhāgavata, contemporary with Antialcidas, the Yavana king of Takshaçilā, c. 90 B.C. according to the Purāṇas (pp. 521–2, 558); Devabhūti (p. 522).
- Feudatories of the Çuṅgas at Bhārhut, Mathurā, Kauçāmbī, and Ahicchatra (pp. 523–6).
- 171—138 Mithradates I, king of Parthia.
- 165 The Yueh-chi defeated by the Huns began their migration westwards (p. 565).
- 162—25 Yavana princes of the house of Eucratides.
- Eucratides deposed Euthydemus from the throne of Bactria c. 175 B.C. (p. 446).
- Conquered the Kābul valley, Ariāna (Arachosia and Aria), and N.W. India before 162 B.C. (pp. 447, 554).
- Evidence of his rule in Kāpiça as successor of Apollodotus I (p. 555), in Takshaçilā (p. 556), and possibly in Nicaea (ibid.).
- Deprived of his conquests in Ariāna by Mithradates I between 162 and 155 B.C., the assumed date of his death (pp. 457, 554).
- Heliocles, probably the son of Eucratides and his successor in both Bactria and India, ended his rule in Bactria c. 135 B.C. (pp. 460–1, 556).
- Evidence of his rule in the upper Kābul valley and in Pushkalāvati (p. 557).
- Extended the conquests of Eucratides—probably to the east of the Jhelum—in the reign of Strato I (p. 553).
- Antialcidas, a member of the house of Eucratides and one of his successors in the Kābul valley (p. 558).
- He may have been the son and immediate successor of Heliocles (pp. 461, 559); on this assumption his accession may be conjecturally dated 120 B.C. (p. 522).
- Evidence of his rule in Takshaçilā (p. 558); in this kingdom he was at one time associated with Lysias, whose family is uncertain (p. 559).
- As king of Takshaçilā he was contemporary with the Çuṅga king of Vidiçā, Bhāga or Bhāgavata (Bhāgabhadra), whose 14th year may be estimated from the Purāṇas as c. 90 B.C. (pp. 521–2, 558).

B.C.

Later princes of this house:—(1) In Pushkalāvati after the reign of Heliocles—Diomedes, Epander, Philoxenus, Artemidorus, and Peucolaus (p. 557); (2) in Takshaçilā after the reign of Antialcidas—Archebius (p. 559); and (3) in the upper Kābul valley after the reign of Antialcidas—Amyntas and Hermaeus (at one time associated with Calliope) (p. 560). The date c. 25 B.C. for the end of the reign of Hermaeus is conjectural: it seems consonant with the view that the upper Kābul valley was conquered in or before the reign of the Pahlava suzerain Spalirises, the brother of Vonones (pp. 561–2, 573–4).

138—128 Phraates II, king of Parthia.

His conflicts with the Scythians (Çakas) in eastern Irān (p. 567).

135 Bactria overwhelmed by the Çaka invasion in the reign of the last Yavana king Heliocles (p. 461).

128—123 Artabanus I, king of Parthia.

The struggle with the Çakas was continued in his reign (p. 567).

126 The Chinese ambassador Chang-kien visited the Yueh-chi who were still to the north of the Oxus. The Yueh-chi expelled the Çakas from Bactria soon afterwards (pp. 459, 566).

123—88 Mithradates II the Great, king of Parthia.

His final triumph over the Çakas (p. 567).

75 B.C.—50 A.D. Period of Çaka and Pahlava supremacy in the Punjab.

Earliest Çaka settlements in the region of the Indus delta (Indo-Scythia or Çaka-dvīpa) (p. 564).

Maues wrested from the Yavanas Pushkalāvati after the reign of Artemidorus, and Takshaçilā after the reign of Archebius. The date, c. 75 B.C., ascribed to these conquests is conjectural: it depends on the view that the assumption by Maues of the title 'King of Kings' must necessarily be later than the reign of Mithradates II (123–88 B.C.) (pp. 558–9, 569–70).

Azes I acc. 58 B.C.—so dated on the hypothesis that he was the actual founder of the Vikrama era (p. 571).

He extended the conquests of Maues to the more easterly kingdoms of the Punjab (pp. 553–4).

Azilises appears to have reigned (1) in association with Azes I, (2) alone, and (3) in association with Azes II (p. 572).

Azes II: his association with the *strategos* Aspavarman proves that he was the immediate predecessor of Gondopharnes (pp. 572, 577).

Gondopharnes, the successor of Azes II as viceroy of Arachosia under the suzerainty of Orthagnes; at one time associated in this office with his brother Guḍa; he appears to have succeeded Orthagnes as suzerain in eastern Irān, and Azes II as suzerain in India (pp. 577–8).

He is known to have reigned from 19 to at least 45 A.D. (p. 576).

In different kingdoms he was associated with (1) his nephew Abdagases who was probably his viceroy in eastern Irān (pp. 578–80); (2) Sapedana and Satavastra who were probably governors of Takshaçilā (ibid.); and (3) the *strategoi* Aspavarman and Sasas (pp. 577, 580–1).



B.C.

Pacores, the successor of Gondopharnes as suzerain in eastern Irān and, nominally at least, in India. In Takshaçilā he was associated with the *strategos* Sasas (pp. 577, 580-1).

His rule is supposed to have come to an end in the upper Kābul valley c. 50 A.D., and in N.W. India soon afterwards (both dates must lie between 45 and 64 A.D.) (pp. 583-4).

Satrap:—(1) at Pushkalāvati—Zeionises (p. 582, n. 1); (2) in the region of Takshaçilā—Liaka Kusūlaka (contemporary with Maues) and his son Patika who appears as great satrap c. 30 B.C. (the supposed date of the Lion Capital of Mathurā) (p. 575); (3) at Mathurā—Hagāmasha and Hagāna (p. 527), Rañjubula (supposed dates—satrap c. 50 B.C., great satrap c. 30 B.C.), Çodāsa (supposed date as satrap c. 30 B.C.) great satrap in 16 B.C. (pp. 575-6).

*Strategoi*:—(1) Aspavarman, son of Indravarmān (Azēs II and Gondopharnes); (2) Sasas, nephew of Aspavarman (Gondopharnes and Pacores) (pp. 577, 580-1).

58 Initial year of the Vikrama era.

Traditionally ascribed to a king Vikramāditya of Ujjain who is said to have expelled the Çakas from India. The tradition may have some historical foundation; but in any case it seems probable that the supposed founder of the era has been confused with Chandragupta II Vikramāditya (380-414 A.D.) who finally crushed the Çaka power in Western India (the Western Satraps) (pp. 532-3). It seems more likely that the era marks the establishment of the Çaka suzerainty by Azēs I (p. 571), and that its use was transmitted to posterity by the Mālavas and other peoples who had once been feudatories of the Çakas (p. 491).

57-38 Orodes I, king of Parthia.

The squared letters which characterise the coin-legends of the later Çaka and Pahlava rulers in India first appear on Parthian coins during his reign (p. 571).

30 Conjectural date of Vonones, Pahlava suzerain of eastern Irān (p. 573). With him were associated, as viceroys of Arachosia, (1) his brother Spalahores, (2) his nephew Spalagadames: these two (father and son) also held this office conjointly, and (3) his brother Spalirises, who at one time held this office conjointly with his son Azēs II (pp. 573-4).

Other suzerains of eastern Irān (in addition to those who ruled also in India, for whom *v. sup.*) were:

Spalirises, the successor of Vonones. The former kingdom of Hermaeus in the upper Kābul valley appears to have been annexed by the Pahlavas in or before his reign (p. 574); Orthagnes, contemporary with Gondopharnes (p. 578); and Sanabares, in Draugiana (Seistān); there is no evidence of his rule in Arachosia (Kandahār) (p. 580).

A.D.

8-11

Vonones I, king of Parthia (p. 573).

50

Approximate date of the extension of the Kushāna power from Bactria to the Paropanisadae (upper Kābul valley) and Arachosia (Kandahār) in the reign of Gondopharnes or Pacores. The Kushāna conqueror was Kujūla Kadphises (pp. 583-4).

A.D.

- 64 The extension of the Kushāṇa power from the upper Kābul valley to N.W. India (Pushkalāvati or W. Gandhāra) had taken place when the Panjtār inscription was set up (year 122=63—4 A.D.). The Kushāṇa king mentioned in the inscription may be either W'ima Kadphises or one of his viceroys—possibly Kara Kadphises whose coins are found in the same region (pp. 582, n. 1, 584).  
Inscription of a Kushāṇa king (identified with W'ima Kadphises) reigning at Takshaçilā in the year 136=77—8 A.D. (pp. 581—2).
- 78 Initial year of the Çaka era.  
The Çaka era appears to have been so called at a later date when it was best known as the era of the Çakas of Western India (the Western Satraps) who were originally feudatories of the Kushāṇas. It most probably marks the establishment of the Kushāṇa empire by Kanishka (pp. 583, 585).
- 89 The Suē Vihāra inscription of the 11th year of Kanishka proves that the suzerainty of the Kushāṇas extended to the country of the lower Indus at this date (p. 585).